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the COMIC READER

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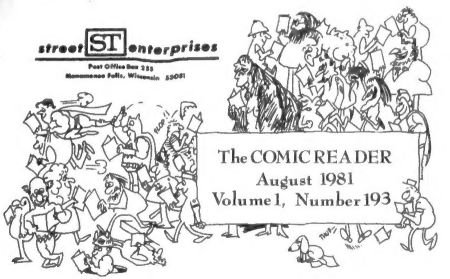

The COMIC READER
August 1981
Volume 1, Number 193

FRONT COVER: Bill Black provides this month's cover, which shows The Savage She-Hulk's rather unrestrained reaction to the news that her book has been cancelled. All characters are Copyright © 1981 Marvel Comics Group, a Division of Cadence Industries Corp. All Rights Reserved.

BACK COVER: Michael Mignola is the artist behind Aquaman's visit to his family doctor; honest, that whole routine is just a means to check his blood pressure! Aquaman is Copyright © 1981, DC Comics Inc.

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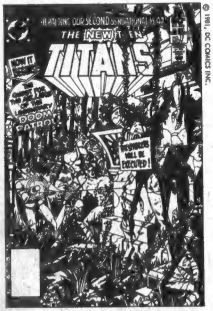
DC News

ADVENTURE COMICS PRESENTS DIAL "H" FOR HERO has apparently been deemed a failure, and will be axed with the February, 1982 issue, #490. There is a movement to keep the ADVENTURE COMICS part of the title around since it is DC's oldest continuing title, having started life as NEW COMICS in December of 1935. But as of now, ADVENTURE COMICS won't be seeing a 500th issue.

Taking the place of ADVENTURE on the schedule will be three new books, all edited by Len Wein. The first will be the long-promised SWAMP THING, to be written by Marty Pasko and drawn by Tom Yeates. The first issue will be on sale in February. The second title to be revived will be FIRESTORM by Gerry Conway and Pat Broderick. Its first issue will be out in March. In both of these cases, despite there being previous runs of each title, DC intends to begin over with #1 again. We can only hope that the titles are altered enough so that we can differentiate between them.

The third new book is officially dubbed a "Maxi-Series" (as opposed to the three or four-issue mini-series now appearing) which will run twelve issues and feature a new science-fiction series. Written and created by Mike W. Barr, it will be drawn by popular British artist Brian Bolland, and it will contain continuing characters. The first issue (which can legitimately begin with #1) will be out in May of '82.



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Because of these new titles, Len Wein has given the editing chores for WORLD'S FINEST over to Mike Barr, who will take over with #275. And Barr has given up the editorial control of WEIRD WAR TALES, which will be taken over by the co-editing team of Julius Schwartz and E. Nelson Bridwell. No details as to editorial changes which may result from these switchings.

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Don Heck's pencils for the upcoming WONDER WOMAN/NEW TEEN TITANS team-up story which will appear in WONDER WOMAN #287.

The super-hero funny animal title has been finally nailed down to a specific name: CAPTAIN CARROT AND HIS AMAZING ZOO CREW. The preview will appear in THE NEW TEEN TITANS #16, dated February, which is out in November, which means that the first issue will appear in December. Roy Thomas and Scott Shaw did the preview story with Ross Andru penciling the Superman figures which appear in the story.

There are two anniversary issues coming up, and both will be extra-size and extra-price. JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 200 will be an 80-pager for $1.50 with a 72-page story which features a 30-page framing sequence featuring the entire group by Gerry Conway and George Perez, accompanying Conway-scripted chapters by different artists in the manner of the old ALL-STAR COMICS stories. Superman and Hawkman will be handled by Joe Kubert, Wonder Woman and Zatanna will be done by Dick Giordano, Gil Kane will take on his old cronies Green Lantern and The Atom, Carmine Infantino will be doing his old charges

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The Flash, The Elongated Man and Adam Strange, Pat Broderick will do the Firestorm and J'onn J'onzz chapter, Aquaman, the Red Tornado and the Phantom Stranger will be covered by Jim Aparo, and Batman, Green Arrow and Green Lantern will be done by a yet-to-be-determined artist (Gene Colan perhaps?).

GREEN LANTERN No. 150 will be 48 pages and will feature a 32-page Green Lantern story by Marv Wolfman and Joe Staton, and a 16-page Tale of the Green Lantern Corps written by Mike Barr. The latter series begins in #148 with the regular writer, Paul Kupperberg, and a chipmunk Green Lantern.

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Above and left: Gene Colan pencils for the special 16-page insert which will appear in DC COMICS PRESENTS #41, showing the changing of the old eagle insignia for the new "W" insignia

The ZATANNA strip, following the first episode drawn by Gene Colan, has been assigned to Paul Kupperberg and Dan Spiegle following an issue by Gerry Conway and Dan Spiegle in #275 of WORLD'S FINEST COMICS.

The DOCTOR FATE strip will be done by Martin Pasko, Keith Giffin and Larry Mahlstedt, and begins in THE FLASH #306.

There's another new strip being created for the back of WARLORD. DRAGONSLAYER, which only just began, ends in #54, and it will be followed by a new creation from Paul Kupperberg.

There is a new art team on THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES as of #286: Keith Giffen and Bruce Patterson. This follows two issues which were penciled by Pat Broderick.

DC COMICS PRESENTS No. 40 will feature the new-look WONDER WOMAN preview. But the other story in the issue is a 27-page story featuring Superman and The Joker by Martin Pasko and Jose Garcia Lopez. #42 will feature Superman and the Unknown Soldier by Paul Levitz and Irv Novick.

Don Heck and Brett Breeding are doing the art for JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 198 and 199, in which the JLA first battles then teams-up with DC's western characters.

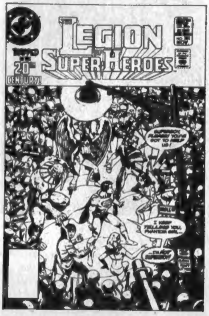
SUPERMAN #367 will feature a Fabulous World of Krypton story by Martin Pasko and the recently-returned Gil Kane.

Another returnee to the DC roster is Pat Broderick, who besides the aforementioned dyties, has drawn a cover and story for WEIRD WAR TALES #108, the last issue to be edited by Mike Barr.

Michael Kaluta has done the cover of HOUSE OF MYSTERY #300 and we are told that it is "breathtaking."

The digest schedule has been announced for the next five months following the last ones we mentioned. (In other words, these will be out six months from now.)

THE BEST OF DC:
#23: YEARS BEST COMIC STORIES (edited by Julius Schwartz)



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#24: LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES (Mike Barr)
#25: SUPERMAN (Schwartz)
#26: THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD (Andy Helfer)
#27: SUPERMAN VS. LUTHOR (Schwartz)
DC SPECIAL BLUE-RIBBON DIGEST:
#20: GOTHIC ROMANCES (Laurie Sutton)
#21: OUR ARMY AT WAR (Dave Manak)
#22: SECRET ORIGINS OF SUPER-HEROES (E. Nelson Bridwell)
#23: GREEN ARROW (Len Wein)
#24: HOUSE OF MYSTERY (Karen Berger)

Finally, George Perez got married on June 26th to Carol Flynn. Congratulations and the best of luck!

Et Al

Doug Adams of Louisville informs us that there is a new Ace science-fiction paperback called PROTEUS: VOICES FOR THE '80s (edited by Richard S. McEnroe) which features interior illustrations by John Byrne and Michael Kaluta, as well as other well-known sf artists. The book appeared in May.

TCR Message

Our full-scale acquisition of a whole bunch of new columnists continues this issue as Sam Kujava's first column appears. A COMIC READER will be a monthly reaction to comic books in general, with attention finally paid to all of those comics the critics never get around to talking about. Sam is a longtime friend, and though he thinks of himself chiefly as an artist, he's a darn good writer as well. I know you'll enjoy his viewpoint, developed over the years in APAs and nurtured as a student in the Kubert School of Cartoon Art!

You may have noticed that Rona Blabbit has been absent last issue and this one... I've got sad news. The R. Blabbit byline will probably not be appearing much in the future, as it makes way for a new MEDIA column written by our friend Joel Thingvall, who should be able to provide a little more in the way of news and a little less in the way of jaundiced opinion. Good ol' R. will be around if needed, but Joel will handle the comics-related happenings in the movie and TV field from here on. Jim is a former MEDIASCENE staffer and also is responsible for the Minneapolis Microcons. Welcome, Joel!

-MT

Warren Coming Comics

Warren is actually soliciting work from new writers who have never had anything published before. If you qualify, contact Warren Publishing Co. at 145 East 32nd Street, New York, NY 10016, attention: Chris Adames.

1994 No. 20, August. This issue's stories are "Little Beaver" by Will Richardson and Vic Catan; "Ghita" by Frank Thorne; "Diana Jacklighter, Huntress" by Jim Stenstrum and Esteban Maroto; "Sigmund Pavlov" by Richardson, Stenstrum and Alex Nino; and "Spearchucker Spade" by Alabaster Redzone, Richardson and Nino. Nestor Redondo did the cover. [7/18]

EERIE No. 125, September. This issue is an all-reprint Neal Adams special, and it features: "Curse of the Vampire" by Archie Goodwin and Adams (CREEPY #14); "Terror Beyond Time" by Goodwin and Adams (CREEPY #15); "Goddess From the Sea" by Dan Glut and Adams (VAMPIRELLA #1); "Thrillkill" by Jim Stenstrum and Adams (CREEPY #75); "Curse of the Claws" by Goodwin and Adams (CREEPY #16); "Fair Exchange" by Goodwin and Adams (EERIE #9); and "Voodoo Drum" by Goodwin and Adams (EERIE #10). Richard Corben did the cover. [7/21]

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FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND No. 177, September. [7/21]

1994 No. 21, October. [8/4]

VAMPIRELLA No. 100, October. [8/4]

CREEPY No. 132, October. [8/11]

THE ROOK No. 11, October. [8/11]

Marvel News

We neglected to mention in the last issue that THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK has been cancelled as of #25, which is on sale in November. The title, whose sole reason for being was to prevent Universal from creating a female Hulk for the TV series and claiming it as their own character, now ceases to have that reason as the show has been cancelled.

The Marvel mini-series have been scheduled and the titles involved will all run four issues each, which will give Marvel an adequate idea as to the sales potential of each one. THE VISION AND SCARLET WITCH will appear in March '82 and will be done by Bill Mantlo and Bill Sienkiewicz. HERCULES by Bob Layton will debut in May. THE WOLVERINE will appear in January and will be by Chris Claremont and either Frank Miller or Mike Golden.

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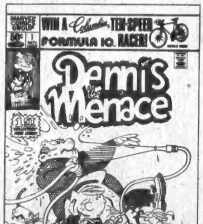
MARVEL FANFARE has also finally been put on the schedule, with #1 set to go on sale in December with a price of $1.25. The book as last described (temporarily renamed MARVEL SHOWCASE) was to be a 32-page, adless comic book printed on cover stock throughout with heavier stock for the covers themselves. It will be bi-monthly and will feature special fan-oriented super-hero team-ups for the most part.

The SILVER SURFER comic will be out in December. It will cost $1.00, is 48 pages and is written by Stan Lee from a John Byrne plot, with Byrne pencilling. No word yet on the inker. It, like so many things these days, will be distributed only through direct sales.

Appearing earlier -- October to be exact -- will be the John Byrne-drawn, Chris Claremont-written, Terry Austin-inked issue of STAR-LORD in full color reprinted from MARVEL PREVIEW #11. It will be 64 pages, will be printed on white book stock, and it will cost $1.50. It also will be sold only through direct sales outlets.

The price on the direct-sales only titles (MICRONAUTS as of #38, MOON KNIGHT with #14 and KA-ZAR with #10) will be 75¢ each.



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Ed Hannigan has created another comic book-toy concept which is tied in with the Ideal Toys racing set called TEAM AMERICA. It involves motorcycles and weird vehicles and is open-ended enough to work into a comic. It is scheduled to appear sometime early next year.

On the heels of FRANCIS, BROTHER OF THE UNIVERSE comes another religion-oriented comic book, this one to be distributed through a Catholic book store distribution company. It features the life of POPE JOHN PAUL II, and it will be by Mary Jo Duffy, John Severin and John Tartaglione, its tentative release date being October.

I'm sure you all remember that Marvel prepared a treasury story as a companion piece to their winter Olympics treasury. It was to commemorate the '80 summer Olympic games, but then Afghanistan had to go and get themselves invaded by the Russians, and Carter cancelled U.S. involvement -- which summarily cancelled Marvel involvement in an Olympics treasury edition. Anyway, the story -- which involved many heretofore unseen super-heroes from all over the globe -- was completed, and Marvel rarely lets anything go to waste. So watch for the story to appear next

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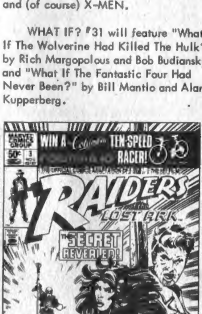
summer, probably as a three-issue mini series called MARVEL SUPER-SPECTACULAR CONTEST OF HEROES. Bill Mantlo, John Romita Jr. and Pablo Marcos did the creative work on it.

The Marvel annual schedule (the schedule of annuals, that is) has been announced, as well as a tentative list of the double-sized special issues which will appear in 1982. Annuals include AVENGERS, CAPTAIN AMERICA, FANTASTIC FOUR, MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, THOR, ROM, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, IRON MAN, MARVEL TEAM-UP, INCREDIBLE HULK, CONAN, STAR WARS and (of course) X-MEN.

Double-sized issues include DARE DEVIL, MASTER OF KUNG FU, DR. STRANGE, DEFENDERS, DAZZLER, and (of course) X-MEN.

WHAT IF? #31 will feature "What If The Wolverine Had Killed The Hulk" by Rich Margopolous and Bob Budiansk and "What If The Fantastic Four Had Never Been?" by Bill Mantlo and Alar Kupperberg.



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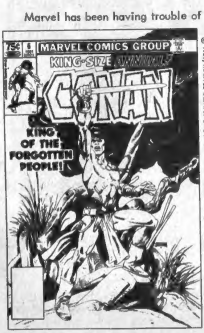
And speaking of issues which will go through the sales roof because of shrewd placement of guest-stars, MICRONAUTS #37 will guest-star the Nightcrawler and the X-Men.

WEIRDWORLD begins in EPIC ILLUSTRATED #9 and is drawn by John Buscema and Marie Severin. It will run nineteen pages in #9 and will run at least three or four more issues.

CRAZY #82 -- which is mostly reprints -- contains a sixteen page Do-It-Yourself-Comic-Book written by Steve Skeates which will have art by Marshall Rogers, John Romita Jr., John Buscema, Terry Austin and John Byrne with a Byrne cover. It'll have pages of super-heroes and word balloons and captions, with instructions on how to assemble them all into your own comic.

Ron Goulart has written an article on the career of Basil Wolverton for a future issue of EPIC ILLUSTRATED.

Marvel has been having trouble of late with artwork being pilferred from their offices. Joe Rubinstein reported a recent case in which pages of his from X-MEN #147 disappeared and later turned up for sale in a Queens gallery. When he called in reference to them, he was told they'd been sold to the Comic Art Gallery in Manhattan. After Marvel's legal department got someone to buy a page from the gallery and its authenticity was proven, the police were called in and the gallery handed over the pages willingly. They would not reveal where the pages came from, but they did give the pages back. Marvel wishes it to be known that they are ready to prosecute anyone dealing in stolen artwork.



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Out in Hollywood, Don Jurwich has been named director of the thirteen network SPIDER-MAN episodes. He is a veteran director of many seasons at Hanna-Barbera. The network show co-stars Iceman and Angelica Jones, a mutant who has the ability to control heat and flame. Guest-stars will include the Hulk, Captain America, Sub-Mariner and Doctor Doom. This one is called SPIDER-MAN AND HIS AMAZING FRIENDS.

Meanwhile, with the SPIDER-MAN syndicated cartoon show which is comprised of 26 episodes, the supervising director is Art Vitello, who has kept the continuity with the Marvel comics straight. He will continue to coordinate the shows as they come back from being animated in the Philippines (by the people who animate THUNDARR), refining them to their maximum. The staff is comprised of Larry Houston, Rick Hoberg and Hank Tucker, who handle the storyboards.

And lastly, those of you lucky enough to catch the live-action Marvel super-heroes in personal appearances (perhaps saying hello as they climb the local skyscraper), don't be surprised if besides Spider-Man, the Hulk, Captain America, Spider-Woman, The Thing and the Green Goblin, you see Ram, Spaceknight. Make sure you don't act like a Dire Wraith around him, though.

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Charlton News

ATTACK No. 31, November. [8/6]

SCARY TALES No. 29, November. [8/6]

CHARLTON BULLSEYE No. 4, November. This issue features "Introducing The Vanguards," a book-length super-heroine team story written and drawn by Larry Houston. Houston did the cover. [8/13]

THE MANY GHOSTS OF DR. GRAVES No. 69, November. [8/13]

BILLY THE KID No. 145, December. [8/20]

WAR No. 30, December. [8/20]

THE FIGHTIN' 5 No. 43, December. [8/27]

GHOSTLY TALES No. 152, December. Wes Crum did the cover. [8/27]

Whitman Coming Comics

BUCK ROGERS No. 13, October. All-new contents. [8/6]

Walt Disney's COMICS AND STORIES No. 491, October. 19 of the 32 pages are reprints. [8/6]

DOCTOR SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM No. 29, October. All-new contents, drawn by Jose Delbo. [8/6]

Walt Disney DONALD DUCK No. 232, October. All reprints. [8/6]

Walt Disney THE FOX AND THE HOUND No. 3, October. All new stories. [8/6]

Space Family Robinson LOST IN SPACE On Space Station One No. 57, October. All reprints by Gaylord DuBois and Dan Spiegle. [8/6]

Walt Disney UNCLE SCROOGE No. 189, October. All reprints. [8/6]

BEEP BEEP THE ROAD RUNNER No. 98, October. Two-thirds of the stories are new. [8/13]

BUGS BUNNY No. 229, October. Two-thirds new. [8/13]

FLASH GORDON No. 35, October. All new stories. [8/13]

GRIMM'S GHOST STORIES No. 56, October. Two-thirds of the stories are new ones. [8/13]

POPEYE THE SAILOR No. 164, October. Two-thirds of the stories are new. [8/13]

TOM AND JERRY No. 337, October. All reprints. [8/13]

TUROK, SON OF STONE No. 127, October. Two-thirds of the issue is new. [8/13]

WOODY WOODPECKER No. 194, October. Two-thirds of the contents are new. [8/13]

YOSEMITE SAM No. 74, October. Two-thirds of the stories are new. [8/13]

Walt Disney CONDORMAN No. 1, October. This (and the next two issues, which are being printed, bagged and distributed together) feature the adaptation of the Disney movie which features their first contemporary-day super-hero character. It's new, of course. [8/27]

Reviews

SUPERMAN II/RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK

There's no real reason for grouping these two movies under the same review heading except that I saw them two days apart, in the reverse order of their listing. That was a mistake. And so was seeing SUPERMAN II at the same theatre I saw the first one; I had been willing to believe that some boneheaded projectionist had simply erred and cut the credits off the first one. They did it again, and then had the gall to explain that they were running at "cut time" to give them more time to run more showings! (For the record, Milwaukee moviegoers, the theatre is the Mill Road Fourplex; they deserve to be boycotted.) It is extremely egotistical of them to believe that I should sit still for paying big bucks for a movie and then have them cut the end off simply to allow them the benefit of going home early, eh? By contrast, I saw RAIDERS at another similar theatre set-up on a Tuesday night for $1.00.

If my reaction to both films was colored by these outside stimuli, I can't say.

In any case, my advice, if you're interested in seeing both movies, is to see SUPERMAN II first. If you see them as I did, within days of each other and RAIDERS first, you'll simply be aware of the almost too-leisurely pacing of SUPERMAN. I'm certain I wouldn't have thought about it if I'd seen SUPERMAN first.

Jean-Daniel Breque and Patrick Marcel outlined the plot of the film in TCR #188, and if you need to know about it before seeing it, go back and read that. I'm going to be speaking about plot points which will spoil things, so I'd advise you to skip the rest of this if you want to see things without knowing.

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I must say first that I enjoyed the movie a lot, that I'm still quite in love with this vision of my all-time favorite comic book character, and that I will unashamedly admit to having had a lump in my throat at various points in the goings-on. Saying all that, I will then go on to say that there wasn't quite enough thought put into this plot before filming, the coincidence that Jean-Daniel and Patrick pointed out being only a part of the problem.

I can only assume that Mario Puzo and David and Leslie Newman must have stopped reading the SUPERMAN bound volumes in DC library around about the 1954 issues, because the facts surrounding the Superman legend which have been established since then

have been ignored for the most part. Just as the "spinning back time" sequence (which appeared in SUPERMAN #84, 1953) was used in #1, the escape of the three renegades from the Phantom Zone resembles the plot of a story from SUPERMAN #65 in which the criminals were freed from an earlier form of Kryptonian sentencing -- space capsules with the crooks in suspended animation. I think the evidence is clear: despite Lara's words to the contrary (and the only reference to the "Phantom Zone" in the picture) the spinning "record album jacket" prison resembles neither "phantom" nor "zone." It seems as if someone at DC said, "Oh yeah, we've got a name for that," and convinced them to use it so that they could put out a PHANTOM ZONE mini-series. (Or am I being too cynical?) When the hydrogen-bomb-laden elevator blows a hole in the Zone, the square shatters like glass. I guess we're just supposed to chalk that up to "alien engineering design."

I'll ignore the explosion in space, the "solar winds" which apparently keep the billows in the trio's capes as they head toward the moon, and the transmission of sound on the weakly-atmosphered moon; those are just conventions of science-fiction adventure movies of long-standing tradition.

But when the crooks begin to shoot force beams from their fingertips, I was genuinely surprised. What are we supposed to make of that? Superman himself, when confronted by the trio in his Fortress, doesn't look too happy by the goings on, but he doesn't look as if he didn't expect it. Taking liberties with the powers as originally conceived went on even in the comic books (Superman was able to change the shape of his body in a few '40s tales), but this definitely goes on my "too much literary license" list.

Speaking of which, suddenly, in the selfsame fight, there are multiple images of Superman all over his Fortress. My own rationalization of this is that he was flitting from position to position at super-speed (à la The Flash) -- but in the context of the film, since he had never shown himself to be able to do that, we're expected to swallow him being able to actually project multi-images of himself. My brother, a non-Superman reader, wasn't especially bothered by this (he recalled the episode of the TV series wherein Superman split into two people!) but anybody who didn't think of the super-speed idea, may have been bewildered. (Another possible explanation is that Superman had preset a projection device, on the lines of Luthor's earlier in the film, to go off during the confrontation. Unfortunately, I can't recall if the other Kryptonians present also split into multi-images, which would put the kibosh on that idea.)

The attitudes put forth by both the criminals and Lara (presumably mouthing the words Marlon Brando would have said as Jor-El if the producers had not decided to eliminate him from the movie, and a share of the profits) when speaking about the Earth inhabitants is pretty astonishing as well. I guess we might attribute the statements made by Zod and Ursa to humor (not recognizing a space-suited astronaut as a humanoid) and megalomania (calling them worms or insects or something like that). But what are we to make of Lara's statements about "marrying mortals?" Are Kryptonians like unto gods now? I know that the original idea was that Krypton was home to a race of supermen, and that Kal-El would've been super even if he'd gone to a solar system with a green or blue or polka-dot sun (which also publishes comic books). But here the red sun is used to separate Superman from his powers, and so we must assume that this is yet another lapse in characterization. I know that the COMIC's Lara would never say anything like that. (Er, well, he might, if Gerry Conway was writing the story.)

...And I guess Marlon's legacy is the cause for Susannah York to continue the mispronunciation of both "Kal-El" (as Kah-LEL) and "Krypton" (as KRYPT-in). Why must aliens have English accents? Why not English spoken with Swedish accents, or Australian or even Chinese for a change? This and the fact that Jor-El's absence (NOT Marlon Brando's) hurts the impressions transmitted by the retelling of the origin and the motivations from the super-trio's standpoint, seemed to me unnecessary distractions.

I didn't really accept the deprivation of powers motivation either. The actual stripping of his powers was done pretty well, but why did he have to do it? The whole rationale ("Mommy said I had to") seems to cheapen the reasons the comic book character hasn't married Lois in forty years: he doesn't really want to. As we've seen in the Mr. and Mrs. Superman strip, it can easily be done; Lois isn't a completely untrustworthy bubblehead. Except perhaps snapping a few bones in the heat of passion on their honeymoon, I can't see the reasoning here. (Maybe Lara wants to see the race "kept pure"?)

And the restoration of his powers was even more confusing. It was only after I'd gotten over being mad about them cutting the credits off again that it sunk in: that green crystal's absence from the red sun device meant that the machine hadn't worked correctly, and that despite his mother's warnings, the deprivation wasn't permanent. It wouldn't have occurred to me at all had I not talked it over with my brother afterward, which indicates one of two things: either I'm very thick, or they didn't do a good job of storytelling. Since there was never any doubt that Superman would reappear to tackle the crooks (especially after seeing Clark walking to the Arctic Circle), I can't see what harm to the story might have been done if they'd have shown him finding the crystal in the Fortress where Lois left it. (Of course, the Mill Road Fourplex may have used the extra time as an excuse to cut the opening credits from the film as well!)

Leave us not forget that at the film's climax, Superman dispatches two of the now unpowered criminals (Lois the other) off the ice platforms in the Fortress and into the sawdust surrounding them. Though we see Luthor being accompanied back to prison, we see nothing of the trio again. Where are they? Are they dead? Of course, the latter might just be what we're supposed to believe. If there is any part of the Superman legend I feel is essential, it's the Superman Code: he shall never take a life. With the lack of further information here, they're playing fast and loose with that.

Okay, okay -- I'm being pretty negative for a film I claim to have enjoyed. Actually, the performances and the special effects were all top-notch (perhaps with the exceptions of the ludicrously-wigged E.G. Marshall as the president, and what's-his-name, the Dodge sheriff -- who's previously appeared in two James Bond films -- who provides the only reason for the PG rating). Christopher Reeve is perfect and believable in a difficult role, and even Margot Kidder manages to make the foolhearty, abrasive and slightly insensitive Lois lovable. Gene Hackman almost walks away with the film as Luthor, wisecracking his way around the dull-in-comparison General Zod as portrayed by Terence Stamp.

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My favorite sequences? Well, the night scene in the Metropolis streets is the longest and most action-packed and I liked it a lot. The flying and punching and slamming, and the pavement destruction, and the jokes about phone booths and the cars hurtling through air are all pretty difficult to top. (I might question why an Ursa-thrown manhole cover would cause Superman to go flying instead of it simply crumbling against his body -- or why a bus would drive him so deep into the pavement that it would take a long dramatic period of time for him to show that he was okay...) But I actually liked another pair of scenes better.

Strangely enough, the scenes in question better reflect the SUPERMAN comic book of today than the rest of the movie. I'm speaking of the diner scenes, in which Clark is first beaten to a pulp, then gets his revenge. This avengement of his pride as Clark -- something Superman rarely has to do -- reaffirms the humanity of the alien being, and shows so clearly that under all the powers and the colored suit, he's just a man, and one easily identified with. Clark Kent was always as important to the character's appeal as Superman, and this shows why.

Richard Lester had to piece this together after Richard Donner was fired, and he did a fine job of retaining just enough of the sort of biblical solemnity of the first part while adding his own brand of humor to the series. I would like to see the next part of the series get smaller in scale, as I can see the same problem occuring here that occurred when DC decided to change the SUPERMAN comics into Marvel-style battle issues: How much bigger can you get? When you destroy Mount Rushmore, the White House and the Eiffel Tower, where do you go for cheap thrills? Many of today's comics critics have criticized Mort Weisinger's handling of the character by pointing out the fact that Superman's awesome power was rarely the central part of the stories. But Mort probably realized that you can't sustain interest in a character who does nothing but fight the latest Creature Who Wants To Conquer the World. I hope more of the kind of thing that happens in the diner appears in SUPERMAN III.

Critics have almost universally loved this movie to pieces, and the box office for the first weekend set a new all-time record, so who am I to argue? I just can't help from wondering if I had seen the full credits would I still have felt as cheated by the conclusion's "Amnesia Kiss"? (And how'd he do THAT, I wonder? Use heat vision to burn out her memory cells? Give her a super-ventriloquistic hypnotic command? Sucked all the oxygen out of her brain to make her retarded?)

I suppose I'll have to wait a couple of years until it shows up on cable to find out.

* * *

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK is tops. I can't think of a thing in the movie that's wrong, and the only thing I'd change if I could would be to see that part two of the Indiana Jones saga comes out tomorrow.

Indiana Jones, archaeologist, teacher/lecturer, learned, bespectacled, and restrained can turn into a veritable superman of his own making at the donning of a pair of jodhpurs and a slouch hat. What a great character! Whoever created him (George Lucas, Philip Kaufman or Lawrence Kasdan) knows exactly what made the heroes of the '30s and '40s so admirable, and have succeeded in creating a guy who's every bit as mythic and wonderful as Doc Savage or Jungle Jim. Indomitable, perseverant, witty, and likeable, while never giving too much away, Indiana Jones damn well better be in a whole bunch more movies, and Marvel should have enough sense to continue the comic adventures!

Let me say that I'm not a big STAR WARS fan. I liked it well enough, but I've yet to see THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK because I don't really care about the characters that much. One of the weaker ones in STAR WARS, I felt, was Han Solo, and this was due to Harrison Ford's performance. I thought it was pretty lame, almost as if he was embarrassed to be in the film. I guess he was saving it up for RAIDERS, 'cause he's wonderfully believable in the same way Christopher Reeve is. There's nothing tentative in his performance.

But let us not slight Steven Spielberg's direction, because it is part and parcel of what the whole experience of watching this film is about. I can only say that if Lucas and Spielberg meant this as an ode to the Saturday afternoon serial, the serial is now on the debt-owing side. This tops anything I've ever seen in the realistic-adventure category. This is almost 90-95% non-stop action, with almost no exposition and not a second wasted. Of course, as comics readers we've seen this issue after issue, since it's pretty well established S.O.P. for comics -- but for movies -- heck, I left the theatre shaking my head saying, "What have movie-makers been DOING with their money before this?"

You've got an unequivocal recommendation to see RAIDERS if you're at all prepared to enjoy action (watch for the boulder and the truck ride), fine acting (besides Ford, pay attention to Karen Allen -- how could you not? -- and John Rhys-Davies as Sallah; if you saw SHOGUN you'll remember him as Rodriguez) and comedy (wait for the swordsman). Pure enjoyment!

(Although Marvel's adaptation suffers the same problems as the other movie adaptations -- they were working from the script, not the film -- I hope Marvel takes a lesson from STAR WARS and goes against the accepted norm to continue the adventures of a '30s soldier of fortune, if only to help provide enough support from the audience to convince them that a sequel will succeed. Lucas has two more planned, and the box office looks great, but every little bit will help. My suggestion though, if they do, is to select the correct inker. Klaus Janson's thin, airy line-work has none of the gritty, stark light/dark quality of the movie which is required for a graphic equivalent. I would have selected either Bob McLeod or Joe Rubinstein to do so, while still retaining John Buscema's identity in the pencils. The perfect choice for the book would be Russ Heath -- but I'd settle for a more suited inker.)

– Mike Tiefenbache

TCR Mailboat

MAUREEN HANLEY, Cinder Lane, Route 2, Camp Douglas, WI 54618: Was delighted to read your article in the latest TCR about THE GREATEST AMERICAN HERO. I was in Chicago visiting the week of April 13th and was able to see this show for the first time. I just about fell out of my seat when they said his name was Mr. Hanley. I'm sure Jim is "up there" smiling. My first thought was to write everyone and tell them of the coincidence, but TCR has taken care of that. Thanks.

[You'll be glad to hear that the series will be back next season, whenever that begins. MT]

GUY NEWHALL, Harwood Eng., South Street, Walpole, MA 02081: I heard there was to be a full story in some comic fanzine of either Dick Duck or Bullet Crow could you please tell me the title of the magazine is? Thank you.

[Actually, the story was slated to appear in a fanzine which fell through, and the story is currently going the rounds of other possible magazines. As soon as Jim finds another place for his nine-page DICK DUCK strip, we will be sure to let you know where to get it. MT]

BILL BLACK, P.O. Box 1216, Longwood, FL: I just read your editorial on page 34 [TCR #191] and I had to say... BRAVO!!

All in all your comments mirror my own thoughts about the PRICE

QUIDE and comic collecting. I've been reaching the same conclusions. How does Overstreet know what is in my collection or anyone else's? I know several collectors but do not know a single one who collects comics because they are mentioned in SEDUCTION, PARADE or because of gore, blood, etc., etc. When I first got into fandom (late '60s) these books were considered to be at the bottom of the pile (Eros, Fiction House, off-the-wall horror books). Now, mainly due to dealer manipulation, they are prime collectibles!! It's insane! I've had dealers say to me... "Hey! You'll want this! It's the classic eye injury issue!" Sheesh! Who cares?

I also agree about Bill Ward's art on the '79 cover. That had no business on the front of the PRICE GUIDE. Ward is a perfect example of a recently "discovered" (invented?) classic comic artist. Only a few years ago, his books would be lucky to demand $1.50. Now the TORCHYs go for hundreds of bucks. DOLL MAN comics (a title I collect) have gone up because of TORCHY filler stories. Years ago, Torchy was considered a detriment to the book 'cause she seemingly took space away from DOLL MAN! Personally, I'd go out of my way to avoid an issue of BLACKHAWK illustrated by Ward. Crandall is the artist to collect on that title!

Oh, I could go on and on, but I'll shut up.

I'm doing some western covers for Charlton. First one will be a BILLY THE KID (#143??). Since you're a Joe Maneely fan, you'll recognize his influence. Now there was a great cover artist! Loved his westerns! Me, I couldn't draw a horse to save my life so I'm relying heavily on Joe's talent.

I've also done a NIGHTSHADE revival that will appear in a future ish of BULLSEYE.

You'll probably be glad to hear that my first attempt at a super-hero book in years was a complete success! FUN COMICS #1 sold out. With #2, I'm starting a series of articles on Simon and Kirby (the guys that directly influenced my becoming an artist). FUN #2 headlines BOYS' RANCH and STUNTMAN. I recently purchased a mint copy of STUNTMAN #1 and is it a beauty!!! Now I'm frantically looking for #2. Do you have it? If I can't buy a copy I'd like to get a good xerox of the cover and anything else that wasn't reprinted in THRILLS OF TOMORROW #20. I'll be glad to pay any costs involved. FUN #3 will take on BULLS-EYE and CAPTAIN 3-D; #4 FIGHTING AMERICAN. Those comics were fun! It's a shame that most comics are not made for children anymore!

[Sorry, but I don't have any STUNTMAN material at all except for a coverless copy of THRILLS OF TOMORROW #19. Unfortunately, the GUIDE lists STUNTMAN #1 in mint at $250, so I suppose I never shall. MT]

JOHN R. MURPHY, 11327 Sageburrow, Houston, TX 77089: I agree with the opinions you expressed in TCR #191. The only point where we diverge is the condition of the comics we collect, and that's just a matter of personal preference. Also, what the pocket book will bear, and mine has groaned under the load any number of times.

I would like to say that Mr. Overstreet has done all of us in collecting a service by producing a Comic Book Price Guide. It is the most definitive listing of comics, and the number of these comics put out to date.

He has done all collectors a tremendous disservice by skyrocketing the prices of many comic books to the point where they are uncollectible by most of us who are on modest to medium incomes.

No matter how much, or how little, a comic book costs me, once it's in my collection it's worthless. Except for the value I place on the book myself. Let's face it, we, the collectors, make nothing on the books we collect, unless we sell them. I, like you, in 99% of the cases, have not sold my books. And, when I do, I only get 50% of what I paid for them, at best. I agree with you that the market is for dealers, not for collectors.

It's well that you've set your sights on the good condition books, because with the less popular or known books that is usually the condition you find them in. Even if they were mint to begin with, they're not by the time all the people have pawed over them looking through a dealer's lesser-priced comics boxes.

Another point I heartily agree with you on is that both you and I are cutting our throats, no matter how trivial the title we collect, when we share our love of a certain title with other collectors. But, sharing is half the fun of collecting, which means other collectors will want to buy. If enough people ask dealers for a certain title, the word gets around. Suddenly, there's a bigger market, and after a while our cheap collectibles have tripled in price.

I concur with you on this strange fringe group that has developed. They have made highly collectible (not for me) and expensive, any kind of pot, drug, bandage or whatever weird item, they can dredge up. Some of these books are a hoot to look at once, or just too gross to even bother with.

This market Overstreet (or whoever) is creating is ridiculous.

When people like you and me are driven out of the market, when we have to find whatever we can dig up to collect, when we have to pay exorbitant prices for a comic we want only to read and enjoy, and not to resell, then something is wrong.

In a lot of cases for myself, others I know, and yourself (if I can be allowed) as B.B. King says, "The Thrill Is Gone."

[Actually, for me, the thrill isn't gone. I'm having more fun now that I've refused to allow the dealer-induced idiocy affect me and my collecting than a few years ago when I sat back and moaned at how ridiculous the prices were. Let me say it again: shop around and you may find many things you'd never believe you could afford. Don't give up the ship. MT]

GARY RICKER, Currently in exile, somewhere west of the Rockies: Is it my imagination, or do I smell goose? A bacover by your fanzine reviewer? How can I ever carp about swiping again? Ah well, at least I've lived down a rejection by Alan Light to pursue a stress-filled career in commercial art -- I'd have insulted the youthful Warbucks but I had a date, I think. Jim Engel acted as my agent in that distant age -- how times have changed!

I'd guess this Galactus piece is four or five years old -- the tail end of the time when I HAD to swipe from the great King Jack. How many of us understood those stylized blacks as we zigged and zagged our speedballs, fully charging our sable hairs? Did the Higgins Ink people send Kirby quarterly royalty checks in gratitude for the legion of semi-pro Sinnotts the great one influenced?

Enough questions. I am writing to express my sorrow at the passing of Wonder Woman's Yellow Bird. The old fellow's mighty wings guarded their treasure with enviable tenacity lo, these many decades. If I may wax poetic, I'd like to beat the closet-sexist "super-heroine" fanzines to the punch with a couple couplets -- an ode to spandex and unstable molecules, I guess:

For the golden bird I search --
I miss not the eagle's flight:
There's still that lovely perch.

Well, gotta go review fanzines. Think I'll step out and get one of those frozen things in the, uh, super-hero character cups. Hopin' to get ol' WW. (So whaddaya think? Can I write THE SEEKERS now? "I say, Jacob! Me blouse has exploded, etc...")

[I stopped caring much about the au-

The Marvel Comics Index

Cover Price: $5.95

Conceived and compiled by George Olshevsky

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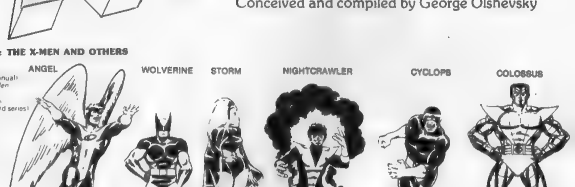
The X-Men Annual
Giant Size X-Men
Black Goliath
The Champions
Ghost Rider (2nd series)



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X-Men X-Men X-Men

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thenticity of WW's costume when they jetisoned the whole i.d. in '68, and then revived it a few years later with the coloring wrong. Her damn girdle's supposed to be white! And the lantern on Green Lantern's chest is supposed to be solid green with no white circle! And Hawkman's boots don't have a stripe across the toes!

Picky, picky, picky... MTJ

GEORGE HAGENAUER, 4906 N. Winchester, Chicago, IL 60640: I've been enjoying the "new look" TCR with the extra columns and articles. Having a real minimal interest in recent comics, Mike's Collecting Corner, the Drake interview, animation column and other stuff makes TCR a lot more interesting. I'm far more interviews providing they're with people who currently aren't working in DC and Marvel comics. I'm real tired of seeing interview after interview with the same DC or Marvel staffers usually dealing with petty office or corporate politics. Since this stuff is well covered in other zines, it would be nice if you could center an either the other publishers or people who worked in the past. (If anyone has a good address/phone number for Lou Cameron, I'd be glad to interview him.)

The lack of good solid articles on older strips and comics has been a major lacking in all the newszines' efforts to thoroughly cover current news -- I miss GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE with its interviews with people like Howard Nostrand, Will Gould, Harry Harrison, et al. It would be nice to see something like that on a regular basis in TCR.

The other areas that no one is addressing particularly well today, but that someone should do something about:

1) Good strip reprint cross-reference indexes -- relating the original date of strip stories to all of their different reprints. This is especially crucial with strips like TRACY where often a story is reprinted two or more times. With prices the way they are, the last thing a non-completist needs is two copies (albeit slightly different) of the same story. This is also important with POPEYE, since you don't need to drop $50.00 on a FEATURE BOOK when the story has already been reprinted in MFG or Nostalgia Press.

This would also be useful even in tracking down and compiling all the Golden Age reprints that have been done by DC and Marvel the past few years and tracing them back to their source -- i.e., listing all the Golden Age FLASH COMICS reprints by their GA numbers so that Kubert collectors can hold off picking up the reprinted issue until last. Having this information in the GUIDE or easily cross-referenced to the GUIDE would help collectors find good cheap alternatives to picking up the expensive originals. It will also help drop prices on later Golden Age and Silver Age comics which have been either partially or wholly reprinted since once collectors can easily learn which stories have been reprinted, the demand for those issues will drop and hopefully prices will also.

The above projects would be alot better use of Bob Overstreet's time than tracing obscure examples of sexual deviation in Golden Age comics.

It would also be nice if someone with a good xerox machine could set up as a checklist information center, i.e., keep copies of all the different checklists that have been done over the years and for some fee plus xeroxing costs, make copies for people who had them. I'm running into young fans who have just discovered Basil Wolverton but who don't have the GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE with the checklist. 40¢ worth of xeroxing and 18¢ worth of postage saves them a lot of work going through the GUIDE. Such a centralized information center (maybe as an adjunct to one of the college library collections) could possibly be set up to pay for itself (covering costs and labor) and would help centralize a lot of the information/research that's being done all over the country.

2) A second area that not enough is being done on (or at least is being published) is good research on a lot of the small companies, obscure publishers, etc. that came out in the '40s and '50s. For instance, Archer St. John attempted a lot of the innovations that current artists are always pushing in all the comic interviews. For instance, he let some of the artists and writers in on ownership of characters they created. He also converted the bulk of his line to 25¢ 100-page giants in the early '50s. While I keep seeing people suggesting or trying the same stuff St. John did in the early '50s, I've yet to see a good detailed article on the publisher or how well a lot of these innovations worked.

Other areas that might prove interesting are MikeRaa Publishing (run by Mike Esposito/Ross Andru), Comic Media (which did some very interesting books like JOHNNY DYNAMITE) and Ace, which had some really good artists and stories (and most of whose staff remains unknown). One reason why I think the rise in prices in early '50s comics is more speculation than real collecting is that nobody seems to be seriously researching the stuff. I've yet to see a good article on Avon despite the supposedly huge numbers of collectors interested in it. This makes me feel that a lot of the interest in early '50s is mainly fiscal since any of the past booms in various genres whether it's DC's Golden Age, Disney Comics, ECs, or classics usually are accompanied by a lot of good articles, interviews and research on each genre. It's a shame because I'm sure interviews with the guys who did all the bloody eye-gauging drek at Minoan/Trojan/Aragon would be a lot more interesting than the comics themselves that are currently supposedly bringing high prices.

By the way, all those people who are busily writing or paraphrasing Wertham's SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT would probably be doing fandom a bigger favor by reprinting sections of the Senate or House Subcommittee's investigating into comics. All of this stuff is public domain and it contains a lot of interesting information on corporate linkages, etc., as well as the Wertham controversy.

Sorry this is so rambling... been up all night doing the Comicon poster and it's been years since I've done a fan letter anywhere.

(And we appreciate it. Some of the index work you mention -- the cross-index of Golden Age reprints -- is being done in APA-I. Don Raa's TCR version of the INFORMATION CENTER column will be open to questions of the very type you're talking about (artist indexes, questions about '50s comics) and may actually provide the very service your letter suggests without the copying costs. Anybody who needs to know any of this type of thing can write and ask Don at 1752 Chichester Avenue #1, Louisville, KY 40205. His column will begin as soon as he gets enough questions, so write already! (By the way, we made a mistake last month: CAPTAIN KENTUCKY #1 costs

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FRANK HAYES, P.O. Box 10860, Chicago, IL 60610: Well, it's only been about four months since you asked... For me, that's still pretty good response time.

The injunction in the DC-Filmation lawsuit was just like any other injunction: a court order preventing the defendant from continuing to take some action or pursue some activity. In this case, the court had ruled that Filmation violated DC's rights by showing MANTA AND MORAY and SUPERSTRETCH; the order enjoined Filmation from continuing to do so.

That is, Filmation could NO LONGER VIOLATE DC'S RIGHTS. Nothing prevents Filmation from showing the cartoons, as long as DC's rights aren't violated.

That may sound like a Catch-22 situation, but it's not. It just means that Filmation needs DC's permission (and, I'd guess, a healthy licensing fee paid by Filmation to DC) before the cartoons can be shown. It sounds like that's exactly what happened -- after all, where else would BATMAN AND THE SUPER SEVEN come from?

By now I'm sure most people have heard about the legal brouhaha surrounding the premiere of THE GREATEST AMERICAN HERO. In a nutshell, DC Comics, Warner Bros. Inc., and Film Export A.G. (they've all got a piece of the SUPERMAN movies) accused ABC of copyright and trademark infringement. The suit claimed that ABC had copied the following:

--Superman's costume and his superpowers, including the ability to fly; and

--the phrases "It's a bird, it's a plane, it's Superman," "Fighting a never-ending battle for truth, justice and the American way," and "Faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, able to leap tall buildings in a single bound."

As in the Filmation case, there's a business angle: after SUPERMAN, THE MOVIE was released, ABC wanted Warners to produce a "Super Heroes" TV show, but that project never got off the ground. DC et al. claimed that ABC went ahead and did the show without the permission of the copyright owners, etc....

Well, unlike the Filmation suit, this one took all of three days. U.S. District Court Judge Constance Baker Motley watched old SUPERMAN TV shows, the pilot for the new show, promotional clips, and SUPERMAN, THE MOVIE -- and promptly threw the suit out of court.

Judge Motley ruled that, though the new ABC character was similar to Supes, "numerous differences tend to undercut substantial similarities...

(ABC's hero is) an ordinary man who reluctantly takes on abnormal abilities... and is comically inept... (The plaintiffs' copyrights and trademarks) do not entitle them to protection of the idea of a super-human character who battles the forces of evil."

DC had asked for an injunction preventing ABC from running the show, and that all negatives, tapes, photographs, and advertisements be delivered to DC for destruction; they also wanted some money. They got none of this. However, ABC must now broadcast a notice that says "The film about to be shown is not created by, sponsored by, or connected with the creators, producers and distributors of Superman."

Last word from ABC's legal department (in late April) was that DC "may appeal" -- "I guess the ball's in their court now, huh?" as the spokesman said to me -- but so far, they've done nothing.

Well, you win some...

And one last thing, re: Roy Thomas's letter in TCR #190: Roy's a talented scripter, a gifted storyteller, and laudably long-winded (and knowledgeable) when it comes to talking with fans. His work has ranged from newspaper strips to bubble-gum comics -- but writing dictionaries he knows from nuthin'.

Dictionaries DON'T "follow spellings settled upon by competent people in their own fields of expertise." I could explain that, but it's AWFULLY dull. Maybe Dwight Decker and Paulette Carroll and Roy and I could start a mimeozine dealing with fanzine manuscript style and suchlike matters...

[As far as I've been able to determine, that notice ABC was supposed to broadcast, never was. What does that mean?

Well, I don't know what anyone else has decided, but the words are "comic book," "science fiction" and "super-hero." The former two are hyphenated when they're used as adjectives; the latter ALWAYS is unless it is the title of something which didn't use it originally. Okay? MT]

ROBERT KENNEDY, 8505 E. 95th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64134: Re: Mailboat #190. If Bruce Long speaks from experience concerning Korea, he must have been there during a very weird year. I spent most of two winters in the central part of South Korea. (Arriving January 1, 1972 and leaving thirteen months later.) If there was snow cover more than a total of thirty days in either winter I sure don't remember it.

Yes, it does snow. Yes, it is colder than the Iceman's jockey shorts much more often than they show on M*A*S*H, but Korea is nowhere near the Arctic Circle. The Army often calls Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, "Little Korea" because, except for a short monsoon season in the summer, the climates are IDENTICAL. I know, from personal experience.

I was stationed with a company sized missile battery in the middle of nowhere. When I came back stateside, one of the first TV shows I saw was a rerun of the M*A*S*H pilot. I have been in love with that show ever since.

Believe me: M*A*S*H is very true to life. I knew a Major in Korea who was the living clone of Frank Burns. That turkey thought that Military Courtesy was only a one-way deal. (It's not!) He was an inspector who needlessly harrassed everyone until we proved we knew the book better than he did. We had a telephone operator with wire-rimmed glasses. He was also on his way to be a priest. Our battery commander got so drunk on the Fourth of July that he fell into a rice paddy. My radar operator partner pulled him out, but the captain was so muddy that he was not immediately recognized.

The village near our gate consisted of straw and salvaged sheet metal. It was populated by farmers, people who worked in our camp and about fifty "business girls."

The area M*A*S*H uses for exteriors resembles much of Korea. The only problem is the lack of rice paddies. (Korea also produces more peanuts than Jimmy Carter ever dreamed about.)

I imagine that the hair cut business is for the same reason that STAR TREK dropped the weird stuff and opted for the pointed sideburns: the actors didn't want to feel like freaks nine or ten months of the year.

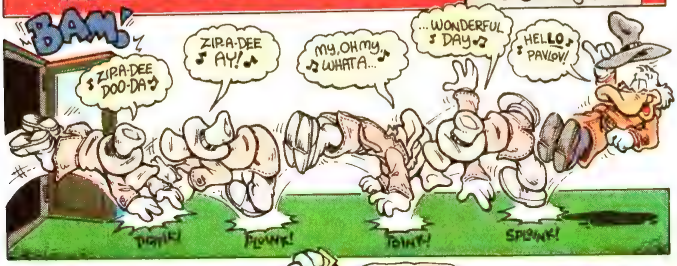
STEVE BILLNITZER, 1234A East Lexington, Glendale, CA 91206: The decline of program quality in the M*A*S*H series is increasingly evident, and

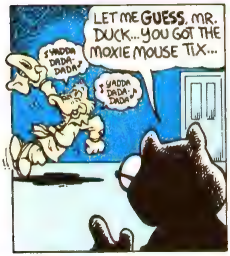
[Continued on page 47]

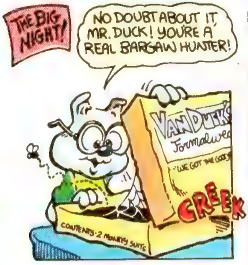
DICK DUCK, DUCK DICK

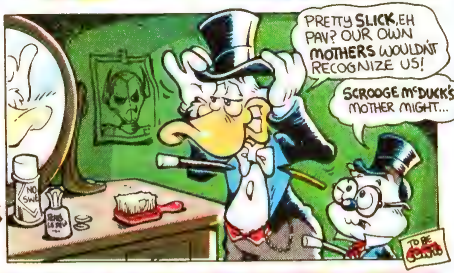
CASE # 419A

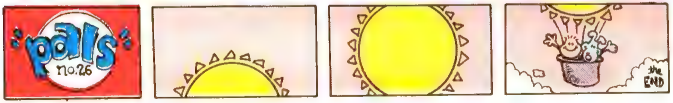
"HEROES & VILLAINS"
CHAPTER: 9
by Jim Engel ©1981









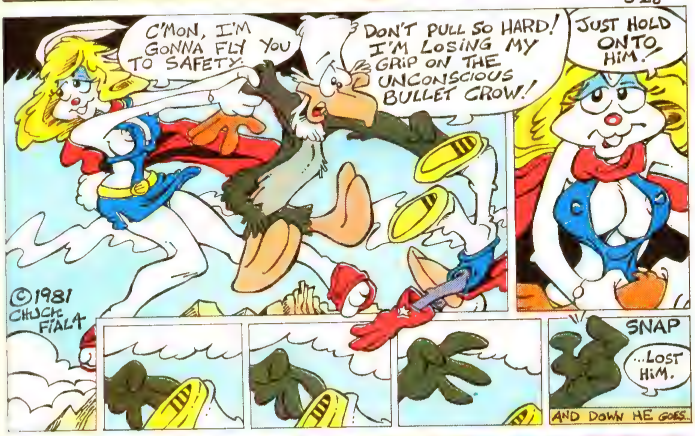


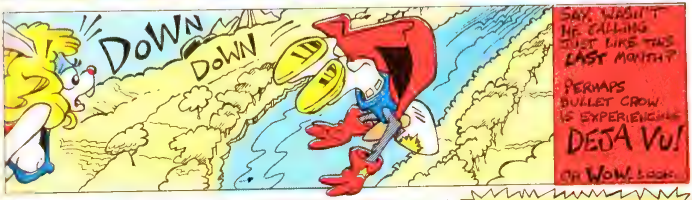
BULLET CROW by CHUCK FIALA

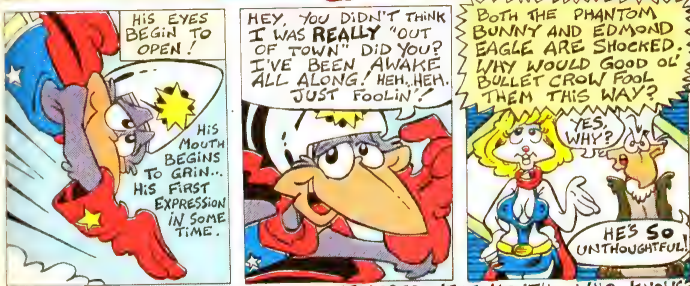
★ ★ ★

FOWL OF FORTUNE

028


C'MON, I'M GONNA FLY YOU TO SAFETY.
DON'T PULL SO HARD! I'M LOSING MY GRIP ON THE UNCONSCIOUS BULLET CROW!
JUST HOLD ONTO HIM.
©1981 CHUCK FIALA
SNAP
..LOST HIM.
AND DOWN HE GOES.




HIS EYES BEGIN TO OPEN!
HIS MOUTH BEGINS TO GRIN.. HIS FIRST EXPRESSION IN SOME TIME.
HEY, YOU DIDN'T THINK I WAS REALLY "OUT OF TOWN" DID YOU? I'VE BEEN AWAKE ALL ALONG! HEH, HEH. JUST FOOLIN'!
BOTH THE PHANTOM BUNNY AND EDMOND EAGLE ARE SHOCKED. WHY WOULD GOOD OL' BULLET CROW FOOL THEM THIS WAY?
YES, WHY?
HE'S SO UNTHOUGHTFUL!

MAYBE THIS QUESTION WILL BE ANSWERED NEXT MONTH. WHO KNOWS?

TCR Top 100 Comic Books

This mo.	Last mo.	Title, number Publisher, format, special features, price if not 50¢	No. sold
1	1	THE UNCANNY X-MEN No. 145 Marvel	10373
2	2	DAZZLER No. 3 Marvel	6149
3	4	THE NEW TEEN TITANS No. 7 DC	5899
4	--	TALES OF THE GREEN LANTERN CORPS No. 1 DC	5540
5	5	ROM No. 18 Marvel-Parker Bros., X-Men guest-star	5486
6	3	KA-ZAR THE SAVAGE No. 2 Marvel	4085
7	8	MOON KNIGHT No. 7 Marvel	4059
8	6	THE AVENGERS No. 207 Marvel	4037
9	29	MASTER OF KUNG FU No. 100 Marvel; 48 page giant, 75¢	3998
10	7	MICRONAUTS No. 29 Marvel-Mego	3959
11	--	FANTASTIC FOUR No. 230 Marvel	3869
12	10	THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 216 Marvel	3865
13	9	IRON MAN No. 146 Marvel	3519
14	13	STAR WARS No. 47 Marvel-Lucasfilms	3500
15	25	MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE No. 75 Marvel; 48-page giant; Thing and The Avengers	3475
16	12	CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 122 Marvel-Robert E. Howard	3351
17	17*	EPIC ILLUSTRATED No. 5 Marvel; color magazine; $2.00	3315
18	16*	DAREDEVIL No. 170 Marvel	3304
19	17	PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN No. 54 Marvel	2936
20	16	THOR No. 307 Marvel	2921
21	21	CAPTAIN AMERICA No. 257 Marvel	2868
22	27	WARLORD No. 45 DC	2564
23	24	THE DEFENDERS No. 95 Marvel	2462
24	18	MARVEL TEAM-UP No. 105 Marvel; Power Man, Iron Fist and the Hulk	2392
25	23	THE INCREDIBLE HULK No. 258 Marvel	2317
26	31	POWER MAN AND IRON FIST No. 69 Marvel	2205
27	30	THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK No. 16 Marvel	2182
28	28	THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN No. 63 Marvel; black and white magazine, $1.25	2169
29	35	DC COMICS PRESENTS No. 33 DC, Superman and Captain Marvel	2131
30	33	JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 190 DC	2059
31	32	THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES No. 275 III	2026
32	36	GHOST RIDER No. 56 Marvel	1867
33	39	ADVENTURE COMICS PRESENTS DIAL "H" FOR HERO No.481 DC	1839
34	41	BATMAN No. 335 DC	1726
35	38	GREEN LANTERN No. 140 DC	1653
36	34*	MAN-THING No. 10 Marvel	1619
37	37	DETECTIVE COMICS No. 502 DC	1580
38	43	THE FLASH No. 297 DC	1555
39	42	SUPERMAN No. 359 DC	1420
40	46	ACTION COMICS No. 519 DC	1358
41	44	THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD No. 174 DC; Batman and Green Lantern	1341
42	45	THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERBOY No. 17 DC	1313
43	48	WONDER WOMAN No. 279 DC	1042
44	47	THE SUPERMAN FAMILY No. 207 DC; 48 pages; $1.00	1011
45	44*	THE HULK! No. 26 Marvel; black and white magazine, $1.25	961
46	53	HEAVY METAL No. 48 IV•#12 HM; color magazine; $2.00	818
47	51*	CAPTAIN CANUCK No. 14 CKR; last issue	804
48	50	JONAH HEX No. 48 DC	658
49	60*	DC SPECIAL BLUE-RIBBON DIGEST No. 9 DC; digest; 95¢; Secret Origins of Super-Heroes	650
50	51	MARVEL SUPER ACTION No. 31 Marvel, Avengers reprints	628
51	52*	THE BEST OF DC No. 11 DC; digest; 95¢; Superman reprints	603
52	54	MARVEL TALES STARRING SPIDER-MAN No. 127 Marvel; reprints	590
53	53*	1994 No. 18 Warren; $2.00 black and white magazine	528
54	57	GHOSTS No. 100 DC	444
55	56*	VAMPIRELLA No. 95 Warren; $2.00 black and white magazine	398
56	59	SUPER FRIENDS No. 44 DC	386
57	56	MARVEL SUPER-HEROES No. 97 Marvel; Hulk reprints	378
58	58	UNKNOWN SOLDIER No. 251 DC	355
59	63	SGT. ROCK No. 352 DC	349
60	61*	EERIE No. 120 Warren; black and white magazine $2.00	345
61	63*	CREEPY No. 126 Warren; black and white magazine, $2.00	344
62	40	FLASH GORDON No. 32 Whitman; part two of the movie adaptation	326
63	65	WEIRD WAR TALES No. 99 III	325
64	61	HOUSE OF MYSTERY No. 292 III	324
65	66	THE UNEXPECTED No. 210 DC	311
66	62	SECRETS OF HAUNTED HOUSE No. 36 DC	278
67	71*	SPIDER-MAN SUPER STORIES No. 52 Marvel-Children's TV Workshop; no ads	273
68	68	G.I. COMBAT No. 229 DC; 48 pages; $1.00	258
69	--	RICHIE RICH AND CADBURY No. 17 Harvey	120
70	82*	RICHIE RICH AND CASPER No. 39 Harvey	120
71	81*	RICHIE RICH SUCCESS STORIES No. 98 Harvey	120
72	87*	RICHIE RICH ZILLIONZ No. 26 Harvey	120
73	72	CRAZY MAGAZINE No. 73 Marvel; black and white magazine; 75¢	115
74	80*	RICHIE RICH PROFITS No. 40 Harvey	115
75	77*	RICHIE RICH DOLLARS AND CENTS No. 102 Harvey	115
76	79*	RICHIE RICH GOLD AND SILVER No. 35 Harvey	114
77	78*	RICHIE RICH GEMS No. 36 Harvey	112
78	82	RICHIE RICH No. 202 Harvey	110
79	80*	RICHIE RICH AND DOLLAR THE DOG No. 18 Harvey	110
80	83*	RICHIE RICH CASH No. 40 Harvey	105
81	84*	RICHIE RICH FORTUNES No. 56 Harvey	105
82	69	MAD MAGAZINE No. 222 EC, black and white magazine; 75¢	103
83	89*	SAD SACK No. 280 Harvey	91
84	99	LAUGH No. 361 Archie	80
85	94	ARCHIE No. 303 Archie	79
86	--	ARCHIE ANNUAL DIGEST No. 38 Archie; digest, 95¢	77
87	90*	HOT STUFF No. 160 Harvey	77
88	--	DOCTOR SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM No. 28 Whitman	76
89	96*	ARCHIE COMICS DIGEST No. 47 Archie	75
90	--	ARCHIE AND ME No. 126 Archie	74
91	97	JUGHEAD No. 311 Archie	71
92	--	JUGHEAD'S JOKES No. 72 Archie	71
93	--	PEP No. 372 Archie	70
94	--	BETTY AND ME No. 119 Archie	65
95	--	ARCHIE AT RIVERDALE HIGH No. 79 Archie	61
96	--	LIFE WITH ARCHIE No. 222 Archie	61
97	98	ARCHIE'S GIRLS, BETTY AND VERONICA No. 304 Archie	59
98	--	LITTLE ARCHIE No. 165 Archie	58
99	--	LITTLE ARCHIE DIGEST ANNUAL No. 8 Archie	58
100	--	EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE No. 91 Archie	54

*denotes less than monthly rankings

PARTICIPATING SHOPS: Oak Leaf Stamps and Comics, Moses City, IA; RTC Comics, Colorado Springs; R&D Buyer Service, Manata, VA; The Comic Rack, Spokane, WA; King's Komic Kastle, Boise; Golden Fleece Magazines, Clevelands Fantastic Worlds, Fort Worth, TX; Bob's Comics, Lawndale, CA; Truckers Union, Eau Claire, WI; Adventure III, Phoenix, AZ; Curious Book Store, East Lansing, MI; Paperback Junction, Cincinnati; Superhero Universe Store #10, Cambridge, MA; Superunique, New York City; Eide's Comix SF Records, Pittsburgh; Fabulous Fiction Book Store, Worcester, MA; Collector's Corner, Grand Rapids, The Comic Store, Lancaster, PA; Jim's Comic Shop, Chicago; Barney's, Nomar, OK; Bill & Bob's, Brooklyn; Books Parlor, Dayton, OH; Comic Kingdom, Chicago; The Book Nook, Champaign, IL; The Turning Page, Milwaukee; Fantaco Enterprises, Albany; Comic Carnival & Nostalgia Emporium, Indianapolis; Comics & Comix, Berkeley; Starship Enterprises, Hollywood, FL; Aardvarks, Albinos and Albinos, Woodsport, NY 13166

Collecting Comics

I can't say I've been innundated by people who've had input regarding the "what doesn't exist" column from last month's issue. But it's early; the issue's only been out a couple of weeks as I type this, and I have gotten several letters. For those of you who missed it, or to reiterate: if you have seen something listed in the COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE over the years and have fruitlessly searched the conventions and shops for them, tell me about it and we'll try to find out if they really do exist, or if Bob Overstreet was steered wrong somewhere along the way.

In any case, I've managed to find a few things I overlooked myself. First of all, LEADING COMICS didn't change to LEADING SCREEN COMICS in the indicia until at least #42; the first issue I have on hand which shows the latter title is #49. So that one has yet to be nailed down.

Also, Robin Snyder (who works at DC, and therefore has access to the DC library) has found (or actually NOT found) that these are issues on the suspected non-existant list: MISS BEVERLY HILLS OF HOLLYWOOD No. 10 and 11, MISS MELODY LANE OF BROADWAY No. 4, and SECRET HEARTS No. 7 (!) and 154. None of these are in the DC files.

And the person who's most responsible for my interest in these matters (having done much of the research himself), Dan Stevenson, wants to add FALLING IN LOVE No. 143 to the probable non-existance column. As with the aforementioned SECRET HEARTS, the issue in question is the last of the run.

Besides these, there are two Fawcett comics which don't exist, and I hadn't noticed. There's no BULLETMAN #13, for same reason, and CAPTAIN MARVEL JR. #34 has #35 on the cover, so (depending on which you want to consider the true number) either #34 or 35 was never published.

Here are several letters written in response to the column:

RON GOULART, Weston, CT: Although I can't tell you anything about most of the latter day titles you mention in your Collecting column, I do own a copy of NEW BOOK OF COMICS #1.

Material reprinted is mostly from the first few issues of NEW COMICS, with some stuff from NEW FUN/MORE FUN added (a page of Dr. Occult and one of Henri Duval, for instance). It reprints just about all of the pages Sheldon Mayer did for Major Nicholson. Similar format to #2.

So this is one Grail that does exist.

[So, despite the absence of a description in the GUIDE, we can now say for sure there were three DC "annual"s prior to SUPERMAN ANNUAL #1. MT]

JERRY BECK, 14 Horatio Street, New York, NY 10014: Your COLLECTING COMICS column intrigues me. Could you verify for me if ACTION Miniature was ever published and does ANYONE have a copy? I'm an old movie serial buff and I've known about this special issue of ACTION for years. It was supposedly published to be given out at Saturday matinees during the showings of the VIGILANTE movie serial, produced in 1947 (the PRICE GUIDE says this was published in 1946). I've been actively looking for this for at least eight years. The cover of the comic is shown in the VIGILANTE pressbook, but I've never found the darn thing.

[Well, I can't help you with the date on it or where to find it, but I know it exists. Jerry Bails has had a copy at some point (and may still have one), as I have read his description of it. The first time I ever read about it was in Mark Hanerfeld's WONDERFUL WORLD OF COMICS which appeared in ANTHRO #6 (July-August 1969); he describes it as 32 pages, 7" x 5", containing one VIGILANTE story which would be equivalent to a 16-page story in a regular-sized comic. (It contains the one-shot reappearance of the Vigilante's original sidekick, Billy "Pop" Gunn.) So I would say your search must go on. (The method by which I se easily found the above Hanerfeld reference was by referring to APA-I material done by Ken Gale, cross-referenced by Randall Scott. Thanks to them!) MT]

KATHY GODFREY, Box 87 MIT Branch P.O., Cambridge, MA 02139: It's a pleasure to see a good zine get better. The expansion of TCR certainly provides something for just about everyone, and plenty for most of us. This issue even caught the attention of my roommate, a definite non-fan, who had a question concerning COLLECTING COMICS. Has anyone ever done (or are there plans to do) a checklist to comics, or at least to those of some of the major publishers? It seems to me that major collectors would be forced by sheer necessity to compile checklists of their own, but what about something along the lines of Brad Day's checklist to the science fiction magazines? My roommate suggests that a checklist would have made it much easier to pick out possible title change/continuations.

[Very coincidental! If you'll recall, in CC #1 I mentioned that if we could find a reason to do it, we'd publish the cross-index of every comics group's output with all the title/date information we've researched ourselves. Well, we've figured out a good reason to do it, and it parallels your suggestion. The working title is THE TCR POCKET CHECKLIST, and it would be just what the title implies: a pocket-book which a collector could carry with him wherever he goes in which he could check off(and grade, if need be) every comic in his collection. It would be arranged by company and alphabetically according to title, with each title broken down by year and month; title continuity would be listed. And plans call for it to be looseleaf so that if someone only wanted to carry around the sheets referring to Marvel and/or DC, he could remove the extraneous pages -- and also so that it could be updated yearly. Obviously the research for this project is immense, and we're still in the planning stages, but we think that this is something a lot of you will want. (I know I'm sick and tired of carrying around three or four pocket notebooks in varying states of disrepair!) Let us know what you think. MT]

GREG ROBERTSON, 1505 Royer, Des Moines, IA 50316: I enjoyed the article on non-existant comics listed in the PRICE GUIDE very much. The Charlton data was especially useful, though it meant retyping my entire Charlton checklist. I did catch you in one error, however. The official title of the Dell comic WYATT EARP is exactly that -- WYATT EARP -- no "HUGH O'BRIAN FAMOUS WESTERN MARSHAL" there at all. I know because I recently purchased #860 (the first issue) and it is listed in the indicia as WYATT EARP. It's possible the title was changed later, of course; I don't know because that's the only issue I have.

I'm listing below a few things that puzzle me in the GUIDE listings; there are others, of course, but I don't want this letter to be too long:
CRIME DOES NOT PAY #1 (Golfing) - does it exist?
THE ALIENS - 2nd edition of #1?
ALLEY OOP - Dell reprint issues from 1965?
LITTLE AL OF THE F.B.I. and LITTLE AL OF THE SECRET SERVICE - are these part of the same title sequence? Doesn't make sense for Ziff-Davis to have had two characters named Little Al.
JUNGLE TALES OF TARZAN #5 - Has anybody ever seen this?
ARCHIE WHERE ARE YOU DIGEST - I suspect this is ARCHIE...ARCHIE ANDREWS WHERE ARE YOU DIGEST, but I'm not sure.
FIGHTIN' TEXAN - Is this a continuation of FIGHTIN' MARINES?
FIGHTING MAN ANNUAL/MANUAL - Were these both the same issue or two separate comics?

[The WYATT EARP case brings up a problem we'll be facing when we do the

aforementioned POCKET CHECKLIST. You're correct, the title did change to HUGH O'BRIAN. . . later. The GUIDE actually does cross-reference the book under both titles -- but since (and I don't have them right in front of me, so I'm not positive) only one or two of the 13 issues say only WYATT EARP, I've filed them all under HUGH O'BRIAN. Does it make more sense to have two separate listings (as with other Dell titles which changed after their FOUR-COLOR issue such as THE CHIEF to INDIAN CHIEF) or to keep them together? I'll explore this question a little bit later. MT]

CRIME DOES NOT PAY, I can't say; THE ALIENS reprinting from 1972 apparently does exist. In 1976, when I ran an index to Gold Key Comics, I mentioned that I'd never seen it and would have if it had appeared in '72, but Warren Bluhm of Ripon, WI wrote and said that he bought one while living in New Jersey in '72. He describes it as having the identical computer code number on the cover but it says "Second Printing" in the indicia on page one. Easy to see why neither of us have found that yet.

I have randomly purchased the 1963 issues of Dell's ALLEY OOP, and it seems strange that I've never seen the alleged reprints. (There's no date data in the GUIDE, so there is a good possibility that this is an error.) I have found identically-numbered second printings of such titles as CAR 54, WHERE ARE YOU? and MR. MAGOO as well as the reprintings of such Universal Pictures characters as THE CREATURE and FRANKENSTEIN. But I haven't seen the '65 ALLEY OOPs.

The way it looks in the GUIDE, LITTLE AL OF THE F.B.I. could easily have become LITTLE AL OF THE SECRET SERVICE with #3 (following #10 and 11). For reasons which will probably be forever a mystery, Ziff-Davis began a whole bunch of series with #10.

I've never seen JUNGLE TALES #5, though this story (that it was printed and ERB, Inc. ordered the entire print run destroyed before it was distributed) has circulated throughout fandom for as long as I can recall. So I wouldn't discount it, but I would not waste my time looking for it either.

Yep, the ARCHIE WHERE ARE YOU DIGEST is a plain error, and is listed under the correct title you named.

No, I doubt that FIGHTIN' TEXAN is continued from that first FIGHTIN' MARINES issue (#15), since the space between issues would mean that the only reason for continuing the numbering (using the same mailing deposit for both titles) would be moot, having expired in the interim. It's likely that it does follow another title, however; I've yet to sit down and try to figure out the St. John group. Can anyone say for sure? MT]

KYLE CORBIN, 4521 Drexel Drive, Raleigh, NC 27609: Do you know how I can obtain a set of the Leaf Confectionary premium comic books?

I'm glad that you attempt to list the exact titles of Whitman Comics in your Coming Comics section each issue. You seem to be trying to list the titles exactly as they appear in the comics' indicias. Apparently, just recently you discovered that the "Walt Disney" in WDC&S is not printed in all caps. This is something I've been trying to convince Mr. Overstreet of for quite awhile. He won't yield to correctness. But why don't you REALLY show him up? Don't capitalize "and" either -- go for 100% correctness!

"Walt Disney's COMICS and STORIES" is the current title. And there's a similar problem with the MICKEY MOUSE title. All my issues after #155 have the title WALT DISNEY MICKEY MOUSE. But my most recent issue is #200, so maybe you should look at the current issue to be sure.

[Yeah, we just recently noticed that COMICS & STORIES was listed as you say, and we're making a half-hearted attempt to keep the other titles similarly straight. Overstreet, however, is doing a book to cater to dealers, and it's been my experience that they're lazy kinds of guys who want the titles to be the same place they were in the the first ten editions. It seems logical to put COMICS AND STORIES (I'm not sure if the "and" was always in small letters) under "C" since every Gold Key issue since 1962 says it that way. But I fear it's a losing battle.

MICKEY MOUSE officially changed to WALT DISNEY MICKEY MOUSE with #148, and reverted to MICKEY MOUSE (Walt Disney going back to lower case) with approximately #205. Thus, if you're going to be strict about it, the GUIDE would list around 150 issues before and after the fifty issue run in the middle, with those in question under "WALT" -- and I can see no real reason for that. "If the change was permanent, okay. But...

And thus we have the common Gold Key/Whitman problem. That capital letters rule (which I devised, so I can blame no one else for it) is so often ignored or contradicted with GK titles in the GUIDE that it would be a major project to try to correct them all. For example, SPACE FAMILY ROBINSON changed to SPACE FAMILY ROBINSON LOST IN SPACE with #15, and then Space Family Robinson LOST IN SPACE On Space Station One with #37, and the GUIDE notes these, listing them in their "correct" places. But MARGE'S LITTLE LULU, which became simply LITTLE LULU with #207, is listed only under LITTLE LULU, though there is a clear title change here. (Whitman purchased the character from Marjorie Henderson Buell, thus the character is not longer "Marge's"...) WALTER LANTZ NEW FUNNIES (first issue, #109) is not noted as such, though the contents change to all-Lantz characters occurs with that issue. And when Gold Key took over the Dell titles, WOODY WOODPECKER became WALTER LANTZ WOODY WOODPECKER, to be joined later by WALTER LANTZ SPACE MOUSE and WALTER LANTZ ANDY PANDA. But this year's issues say (sigh) Walter Lantz WOODY WOODPECKER. And to get really technical, the correct title for MARCH OF COMICS up to the early '70s is BOYS' AND GIRLS' MARCH OF COMICS! None of these technicalities are observed in their appropriate places in the GUIDE: WALTER LANTZ doesn't even have one cross-reference!

The thing is, fandom at large will have to accept these titles under the "correct" names, and after all this time, it may be impossible to get them to do it. Heck, I even still refer to it as "SPACE FAMILY ROBINSON."

The Leaf comics (the DC "Secret Origins" candy comics) -- if you can get no response from them at Leaf Confectionary Inc., Chicago, IL 60651, the address on the wrapper -- might be obtainable from SUPER HEROES Collector Album Offer, 1955 Raymond Drive, Suite 100, Northbrook, IL 60062, the address on the back of the comics themselves. That's the address to order an album to hold the comics in, but they may be able to tell you where you can order the comics themselves. MT]

I'd like to thank Cat Yronwode for her kind words, both in her column in THE BUYER'S GUIDE and in a personal letter, for the supportive words about the PRICE GUIDE complaints. I appreciate the mention -- I often feel that there aren't many people really listening!

And lastly, that comic which appeared in #191's column with the caption "Don't buy this! It costs $30.00!" was IT'S GAMETIME #3. The reason for its inclusion is simply that it is the archetypical "gouge" comic book -- since its contents are simply the crossword, maze, puzzle and quick-quiz pages which appeared for years in DC's other titles REPRINTED -- with no comic stories at all -- you have to know that the only reason it's worth anything is because so few people bought one of the four issues published! Which means, if someone had been silly enough to do it back then, if DC had published an issue with nothing in it but text stories THAT would cost $30.00 today!

And that is what we're supposed to be collecting. Urrrp!

- Mike Tiefenbacher

THE SEEKERS
by John Burns

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
EN ROUTE TO EL PARADOR THE SEEKERS ARE SKY-JACKED!
YOU WILL KEEP VERY STILL IN YOUR PLACES! OTHERWISE... ONE BULLET THROUGH THE PRESSURISED HULL OF THE PLANE — AND PFFTT!
AND ESPECIALLY YOU MY FRIENDS... NO TRICKS... HUH?
YOU WILL CHANGE COURSE CAPITAN!
HOLY CROW! DON'T TELL ME — LET ME GUESS... YOU WANT ME TO HEAD FOR HAVANA?
WRONG, AMIGO! YOU WILL FLY TO EL PARADOR — AND THERE FOUR PASSENGERS WILL LEAVE YOU. TWO BY PARACHUTE... AND TWO — BY A QUICKER METHOD OF DESCENT!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
I...OHHHH! THE SHOCK... I'M A BAD TRAVELLER... I'M GOING TO BE SICK...!
DIOS!
GOOD THINKING, JACOB!
CARRY ON, SENOR SEEKER! SOON YOUR SICKNESS WILL BE CURED FOR GOOD!
JACOB HURLS HIMSELF AT THE GUNMAN LIKE AN UNCOILED SPRING...

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
AND NOW FOR THE OTHER ONE!
CAREFUL, JACOB — HE'S ON THE FLIGHT DECK...!
BUT NOW THE PASSENGERS PANIC!
YOU CAN'T GO UP THERE! YOU HEARD WHAT THE OTHER ONE SAID... ONE BULLET THROUGH THE HULL AND WE'LL ALL BE DONE FOR!
COMPADRE! LOOK OUT! I HAVE... AHHHH!
SOUNDS LIKE YOUR PALS IN TROUBLE BACK THERE! MAYBE YOU'D BETTER TURN IT IN!
SHUT YOUR MOUTH! I WILL DEAL WITH THIS!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
DIOS! I WARNED YOU YOU FOOLS! NOW YOU WILL ALL DIE!
AND I HAVE A HORRIBLE SUSPICION HE MEANS IT! UNLESS...
ALL OF YOU!
HANG ON KIDS! WE'RE GOING DOWN... THE QUICK WAY!
AS THE GUNMAN TURNS, THE PILOT RAMS THE CONTROL COLUMN VIOLENTLY FORWARD...

The Menomonee Falls Gazette

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
WITHIN THE STEEPLY-DIVING PLANE — CHAOS!
I'LL GIVE THAT PILOT A MEDAL — IF ONLY HE DOESN'T SHAKE THE WINGS LOOSE!
OKAY, SKIPPER— YOU CAN LEVEL OFF NOW. WE'LL HAVE NO MORE BOTHER FROM THESE TWO!
WE'VE STILL GOT TROUBLES! THESE CRATES WEREN'T BUILT FOR AEROBATICS...I'M GOING TO HAVE TO PUT HER DOWN IN A HURRY!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
NOBODY SEEMS BADLY DAMAGED, JACOB. I'D HATE TO THINK THAT WE WERE RESPONSIBLE, IN A WAY...
SURE! I'M GOING UP FRONT TO SEE WHAT KIND OF STATE THINGS ARE IN THERE
...SOME KIND OF STRUCTURAL DAMAGE! THAT DIVE MUST HAVE WRENCHED THE WHOLE FRAMEWORK... ...BUT I GUESS I CAN GET HER DOWN IN ONE PIECE!
POSITION, SKIPPER— JUST CROSSING COAST-LINE OF EL PARADOR...
EL PARADOR! WELL, WE GOT HERE THE FASTEST WAY!
BUT I WONDER WHAT KIND OF WELCOME WE... GET!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
THE SEEKERS HAVE ARRIVED IN EL PARADOR —AND GET AN OFFICIAL RECEPTION!
HERE COMES THE WELCOMING COMMITTEE!
AND SOMEBODY'S GOING TO HAVE A LOT OF EXPLAINING TO DO!
...AND THESE TWO MEN ORDERED YOU TO FLY TO EL PARADOR?
RIGHT! BUT IT WASN'T THE PLANE THEY WANTED ...IT WAS THIS GUY AND HIS GIRLFRIEND!
AND BANG GOES OUR HOPE OF SECRECY! NOW THE WHOLE COUNTRY'LL KNOW WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR!
YOU, H.... COME TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS. I HAVE MANY QUESTIONS TO ASK!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
LATER—AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, BARRANCA CITY.
YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A MISSING FRIEND, A SENOR... GOLIGHTLY... CORRECT? YOU THINK HE MAY BE IN THIS COUNTRY? WHY?
DOESN'T THE NAME GOLIGHTLY MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?
"ALL ENGLISH HAVE STRANGE NAMES... AND THIS ONE IS NO EXCEPTION..I HAVE NO INTEREST IN THIS MATTER, SINCE YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING CRIMINAL. YOU MAY GO... BUT I ADVISE YOU TO KEEP OUT OF TROUBLE!
BUT HE ASKED US PRACTICALLY NOTHING!
HE DIDN'T ASK— BECAUSE HE ALREADY KNOWS!

THE SEEKERS
by John Burns

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
2.2.00
"ABOUT THE WORST DISASTER IN PARADORIAN HISTORY WAS WHEN BARRANCA LOST THE ATLANTIC GOLD CUP TO CASTLEGATE UNITED...ON A PENALTY SCORED BY GARRY GOLIGHTLY! AND YET THE CHIEF OF POLICE HAS NEVER HEARD OF IT!
WHICH MEANS THAT GOLIGHTLY AND THE CUP ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY IN EL PARADOR... AND IT'S A STATE SECRET!
AND YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO PEOPLE WHO TRY TO UNLOCK STATE SECRETS!
UGH! LET'S MOVE ON, JACOB— I CAN FEEL HOT BREATH ON MY NECK ALREADY!
THIS IS THE KIND OF PLACE WE NEED!
LOOK, CHUM, I'VE NEVER NTERFERED WITH WHAT YOU DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME! BUT THIS IS HARDLY...
SENOR! SENORA! YOU WANT TO SEE A GOOD SHOW... ALL NAKED... TEN PESOS ONLY... DRINKS VERY CHEAP...

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO FIND IN A PLACE LIKE THIS—OTHER THAN THE OBVIOUS THING!
SINCE THE LAW'S AGAINST US—THE UNDERWORLD MAY BE FOR US! AND THIS LOOKS A GOOD PLACE TO FIND OUT!
TWO WHISKEYS, SENOR, POR FAVOR— AND A DRINK FOR YOURSELF, PERHAPS YOU COULD GIVE ME A LITTLE ADVICE...?
YOU WANT GIRL? DON'T ASK—JUST TAKE YOUR PICK!
YOU'RE NEW HERE, HUH? THAT'S A PRETTY-LOOKING MAN YOU GOT— HE RUN MANY GIRLS?
WE GOT ANOTHER ENGLISH HERE—BUT SHE'S ALL THE TIME DRUNK! GUESS NEW MAN RUN OUT ON HER!
ENGLISH! SHE MAY BE JUST THE GIRL WE NEED!
CRAZY! FOUR THOUSAND MILES FOR WHAT HE COULD GET AT HOME!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
AY-UP, JOD-AN! LET'S AVE ANOTHER TIA MARIA... NOVE O' YER FOREIGN MUCK!
YOU DON'T BRING NO TRADE— YOU GET NO MORE DRINKS!
JACOB! IT... SHE'S...
...MRS. ERNIE ENTWHISTLE!
MRS. ENTWHISTLE. I PRESUME? ALLOW ME TO BUY YOU A DRINK
AN' WHO THE 'ELL ARE YOU? TRYIN' T' PICK ME UP...
WE...WE'RE FRIENDS OF GARRY GOLIGHTLY...

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
FRIENDS O' GARRY, THAT LOUSY BIG-BADED DOUBLE-CROSSIN' LITTLE...
SUZANNE HAS MADE THE WRONG APPROACH TO GARRY GOLIGHTLY'S BRETHWILE GIRLFRIEND!
IS NEW FANCY-WOMAN, ARE YER? I'LL GIVE YER SUMMAT T' LAUGH AT!
LET THEM FIGHT, SENOR! WOMAN-FIGHT VERY GOOD FOR BUSINESS... MAKE EVERYONE MORE THIRSTY! ANYWAY, POLICIA COME PRETTY SOON!

The Menomonee Falls Gazette

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
R204
FOR GOODNESS... SAKE! WE'RE TRYING TO... HELP YOU!
IN A SLEAZY NIGHTCLUB, SUSANNE TANGLES WITH GARRY GOLIGHTLY'S DISCARDED GIRL-FRIEND...
LOOK, IT WAS ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING! YOU LOOK LIKE A SENSIBLE MAN... PERHAPS THIS WILL STRAIGHTEN THINGS OUT
VICE MUST BE STAMPED OUT IN EL PARADOR! ALL HERE ARE UNDER ARREST! HOWEVER, SINCE YOU ARE A FOREIGNER...
...AND SINCE IT IS THE FEAST DAY OF SAINT DOLORES I SHALL BE MERCIFUL! ADIOS, SEÑOR!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
SUSANNE AND MRS. GOLIGHTLY FIND THEMSELVES IN BARRANCA JAIL—WOMEN'S SECTION...
FH, LUV, I SUPPOSE I WERE A BIT HASTY! ANY ROAD, WE'RE BOTH IN THE SAME BOAT NOW— THANKS TO GARRY GOLIGHTLY!
A HEART-TO-HEART SESSION — ALL GIRL'S TOGETHER! THIS IS WHERE I MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING!
R205
GARRY AN' ME WAS AT 'IS BOUTIQUE BACK 'OME IN CASTLEGATE. 'E WANTED T' CUP TO DISPLAY IN 'IS WINDER— AN' I PINCHED ERNIE'S BOARDROOM KEYS AND GOT IT FOR 'IM. THEN ALL THESE DAGO TYPES COME STEAMIN' IN— AND WE WAS ON OUR WAY...
...TO EL PARADOR... YOU WERE KIDNAPPED!
SEEMED THAT WAY— BUT IT DIDN'T SEEM TO BOTHER GARRY THAT MUCH! AND WHEN THEY GOT US 'ERE, 'E JUST DISAPPEARED

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
R206
'OW THE 'ELL SHOULD I KNOW! THEY TOOK 'IM OFF TO SOME PLACE CALLED 'ACIENDA MURANA... AND 'E DIDN'T EVEN SAY GOODBYE!
SO YOU AND GARRY GOLIGHTLY, PLUS THE ATLANTIC GOLD CUP, WERE KIDNAPPED AND BROUGHT TO EL PARADOR? BUT WHERE'S GARRY NOW— AND WHERE'S THE CUP?
THEY JUST TURNED ME LOOSE TO LOOK AFTER MESELF! I KNEW I COULDN'T MAKE A FUSS— OR IT'D HAVE COME OUT ABOUT ME AND GARRY. ERNIE UD'VE BIN 'THAT WILD...
'HACIENDA MURANA'! I'VE GOT TO LET JACOB KNOW!
COME ALONG, SEÑORITAS! YOU HAVE A DATE— WITH THE JUDGE!

THE SEEKERS
by J. M. Burns
R207
WOMEN ON CHARGES OF IMMORALITY, YOUR HONOUR!
I WONDER IF SUSANNE WAS ABLE TO PUMP MRS. E?
JUSTICE IN EL PARADOR!
PABLO, MY HUSBAND, SOON I SHALL RETURN TO YOU!
BREAK IT UP! THE JUDGE IS WAITING!
I HOPE JACOB'S TAKING NOTICE OF THAT TOUCHING SCENE. THIS MAY BE MY ONLY CHANCE OF PASSING ON INFORMATION FOR (GULP)... SOME TIME!
DARLING... MEET ME AT GARRY'S PLACE—HACIENDA MURANA!

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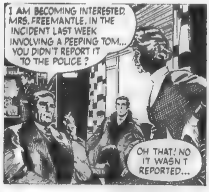
by FRANCIS DURBRIDGE
NEXT MORNING, STEVE TAKES JANICE FROM HOSPITAL, BACK TO GROSVENORE HALL SCHOOL...
THERE'S ANOTHER THING I WANT TO ASK YOU, JANICE... THIS "PEEPING TOM" YOU SAW...
OH, HIM!
41
YOU THOUGHT YOU RECOGNISED HIM, DIDN'T YOU? WHY WON'T YOU NAME HIM?
BECAUSE I WASN'T CERTAIN...
BUT I SUPPOSE I CAN TELL YOU... HE LOOKED VERY MUCH LIKE THE PHOTOGRAPH OF MISS FARSON-BYRNE'S NEPHEW... I'VE SEEN IT ON HER DESK
PAUL TEMPLE
by FRANCIS DURBRIDGE
YES, MRS. TEMPLE...
YOU UNDERSTAND, JANICE... YOU MUST TELL THE SUPERINTENDENT EVERYTHING YOU HAVE TOLD ME
42
WHEN JANICE HAS TOLD HER STORY...
WELL, THANK YOU, JANICE, OF COURSE, WE NEVER REALLY THOUGHT YOU HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE MURDER... NOW RUN ALONG MY DEAR!
I HAVE IN FACT SWITCHED MY SUSPICIONS ELSEWHERE — TO ANOTHER GIRL!
PAUL TEMPLE
by FRANCIS DURBRIDGE
I HAVE DISCOVERED THAT ANGELA PERRISS — THE ONE WHO DISCOVERED THE MURDER — WAS ABOUT TO BE EXPELLED...
BUT YOU DON'T THINK...?
43
SHE'S POWERFULLY BUILT — WAY AHEAD OF HER AGE GROUP PHYSICALLY — AND UNDER EXTREME EMOTION SHE MIGHT CONCEIVABLY HAVE STABBED THE HEADMISTRESS!
SO WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT THAT SUPERINTENDENT?
AT THE MOMENT NOTHING. THE GIRL IS IN BED — UNDER SUPERVISION
MESSAGE FOR YOU, SIR. COULD BE IMPORTANT
PAUL TEMPLE
by FRANCIS DURBRIDGE
AH... THE PRINCIPAL'S NEPHEW — PHILIP RIDGER — HAS CABLED THAT HE IS FLYING BACK FROM MAJORCA TODAY
44
THAT REMINDS ME — I THINK JANICE GRANT HAD SOMETHING ELSE TO TELL YOU... ONLY YOU RATHER HUSTLED HER OUT
OH, NO? WHAT'S THAT?
YOU REMEMBER THE "PEEPING TOM" INCIDENT LAST WEEK?...
WELL, JANICE THOUGHT SHE RECOGNISED HIM — AS PHILIP RIDGER
BUT THAT'S NONSENSE, RIDGER WAS IN MAJORCA
THAT'S SOMETHING THAT OUGHT TO BE CHECKED, SUPERINTENDENT!

The Menomonee Falls Gazette

IT'S TIME I HAD A SHORT CHAT WITH THE DEPUTY HEADMISTRESS MRS. FREEMANTLE ABOUT THIS PEEPING TOM BUSINESS
MIND IF I COME ALONG?

SINCE YOU SEEM TO BE TAKING OVER THIS CASE, TEMPLE, YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW THAT THE MURDER WEAPON HAD NO FINGER PRINTS ON IT – AND IT HAD RECENTLY BEEN SHARPENED TO A RAZOR EDGE!
DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A SCHOOLGIRL SLIP!


I AM BECOMING INTERESTED MRS. FREEMANTLE, IN THE INCIDENT LAST WEEK INVOLVING A PEEPING TOM... YOU DIDN'T REPORT IT TO THE POLICE?
OH THAT? NO IT WASN'T REPORTED...

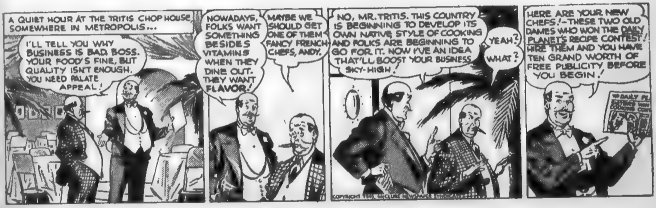
PAUL TEMPLE
by FRANCIS DURBRIDGE
DID YOU KNOW THAT JANICE BELIEVES THAT THE INTRUDER WHO CLIMBED UP THE TREE OUTSIDE HER DORMITORY WAS– PHILIP RIDGER?
GOOD GRACIOUS, NO!
48

SUPERMAN by Siegel & Shuster

E-EEE! IT'S A ROASTED DUCK—BUT IT'S ALIVE!
I—I'M GOING TO FAINT!
CALM YOURSELVES. IT'S JUST ANOTHER ONE OF MR. MKYZTPKLK'S PRANKS.
YOU! YOU LITTLE DEVIL!
NICE WORK, SUPER!
I'LL TEACH YOU—YOU SAWED-OFF RUNT!
AMELIA—NOT SO HARD! I'M SURE HE DIDN'T MEAN ANY HARM!

NEXT TIME YOU TRY ANY FUNNY STUFF, YOU GET DOUBLE! REMEMBER!
AUNTIE AMELIA—DON'T YOU HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR?
LATER...
NOW THAT DINNER'S OVER, MR. MKYZPICKLE, YOU CAN START RIGHT IN LEARNING HOW TO BE A CHEF BY DOING THE DISHES!
OH—CAN I? SWELL!
(—MM— I DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE SAYS THAT. HE SEEMS TOO ANXIOUS.—)

SINCE I'VE GOT TO DO THE DISHES, HOW ABOUT HELPING ME CLEAN OFF, SUPER?
THEY'LL BE SMASHED!
DON'T WORRY, AUNTIE ANNABELLE. THEY WON'T BREAK, YOU JUST DON'T KNOW SUPER!
HOLD STILL, SUPER. I'VE GOT TO GET THOSE DISHES CLEAN!
I WAS AFRAID OF SOMETHING LIKE THIS!
I'M BEGINNING TO THINK MR. MKYZPICKLE IS GOING TO BE A LITTLE TOO MUCH FOR US!


A QUIET HOUR AT THE TRITIS CHOP HOUSE SOMEWHERE IN METROPOLIS...
I'LL TELL YOU WHY BUSINESS IS BAD, BOSS. YOUR FOOD'S FINE, BUT QUALITY ISN'T ENOUGH. YOU NEED PALATE APPEAL!
NOWADAYS, FOLKS WANT SOMETHING BESIDES VITAMINS WHEN THEY DINE OUT. THEY WANT FLAVOR!
MAYBE WE SHOULD GET ONE OF THEM FANCY FRENCH CHEFS, ANDY.
NO, MR. TRITIS. THIS COUNTRY IS BEGINNING TO DEVELOP ITS OWN NATIVE STYLE OF COOKING AND FOLKS ARE BEGINNING TO GO FOR IT. NOW I'VE AN IDEA THAT'LL BOOST YOUR BUSINESS SKY-HIGH!
YEAH?
WHAT?
HERE ARE YOUR NEW CHEFS!—THESE TWO OLD DAMES WHO WON THE DAILY PLANET'S RECIPE CONTEST! HIRE THEM AND YOU HAVE TEN GRAND WORTH OF FREE PUBLICITY BEFORE YOU BEGIN!

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The Menomonee Falls Gazette

SAY—THAT'S AN IDEA! IF WE CAN ANNOUNCE THAT OUR COOKS ARE THE WINNERS OF THIS DAILY PLANET'S RECIPE CONTEST, THE CUSTOMERS'LL COME RUNNING!
HIRE THEM, ANDY. I'LL LET YOU ARRANGE THE PRICE—WITHIN REASON, OF COURSE.
NOW YOU'RE TALKING, MR. TRITIS.
THE APARTMENT OR ANNABELLE AND AMELIA...
WELL—WE'VE MET SUPERMAN, AND WE'VE GOTTEN OUR PRIZE. IT'S TIME TO BE THINKING OF GOING BACK TO BEAGLEVILLE, AMELIA...
NOT YET, WE STILL HAVE A PERSONAL BILITY
SHE MEANS ME, AUNTIE ANNABELLE.
WE PROMISED TO MAKE A CHEF OUT OF YOU SO YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GO OUT AND EARN AN HONEST LIVING. I WONDER IF WE CAN DO IT IN A WEEK?
A WEEK! WHY, I CAN BE A CHEF RIGHT NOW!
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WHY WASTE A WEEK TEACHING ME TO BE A CHEF WHEN I CAN BE ONE RIGHT NOW?
BRAGGING AGAIN! WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A GOOD CHEF OUT OF YOU, NOT A ONE-MAN CRUSADE FOR INDIGESTION.
BUT, AUNTIE AMELIA, I ESPECIALLY CAN COOK UP MISCHIEF ANYTHING!
YES—
OH—SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR.
LADIES—IN VIEW OF YOUR WINNING THE DAILY PLANET'S RECIPE CONTEST, THE TRITIS CHOP HOUSE IS MAKING A GENEROUS OFFER. IF YOU'LL TAKE OVER OUR KITCHEN,
GRACIOUS—NO,
SORRY—BUT WE'RE NOT INTERESTED.
IN THAT CASE—WHAT ABOUT ME?
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IF YOU WON'T ACCEPT THIS GENTLEMAN'S OFFER, HOW ABOUT MY BEING CHEF AT THE TRITIS CHOP HOUSE?
WHO'S HE?
HE'S OUR— OUR... PROTEGE!
THE NAME IS MIXZTPLIK. MY SPECIALTIES ARE STEWS, SOUFFLES, RAGOUTS, RARE BITS AND OTHER SAVORY AND SUCCULENT PALATE-TITILLATING DELICACIES!
ER—HOW DO YOU DO, MISTER MIZIKALPOP!
IF YOU TWO LADIES CAN'T ACCEPT OUR OFFER, WE MIGHT CONSIDER SOMEONE WE COULD ADVERTISE AS YOUR PROTEGE.
MISTER MIXTAPICKLE—I WANT A PRIVATE WORD WITH YOU!
YOU CAN'T TAKE THAT'S WHAT THIS JOB WE (YOU THINK) HAVEN'T EVEN AUNTIE— TAUGHT YOU TO GET SET COOK YET. FOR A BIG SURPRISE!
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THE TROUBLE WITH MOST CHEFS—THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S EDIBLE... GIVE ME THE JOB AND I'LL CUT YOUR FOOD BILL IN HALF! FOR EXAMPLE, HERE'S A DIME'S WORTH OF CROCKERY...
WHAT ARE YOU SALTING THIS PLATE FOR? THERE'S NOTHING ON IT!
I'M RUNNING A CHOP HOUSE, NOT A LOONY BAR!
WAIT! I'LL TASTE IT!
TRY TO OVERCOME YOUR THREE DIMENSIONAL PREJUDICES AND HAVE A BITE!
WHAT ARE YOU BLATHING ABOUT?
AS A CHEF, HE'S A GOOD COMEDIAN!
IN THAT CASE, I'LL EAT IT MYSELF. IT'S A SHAME TO LET GOOD FOOD GO TO WASTE!
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...ial Film Preview

...Cartoons all day
...ation in Comics Panel (meet Julie Schwartz): Schwartz, ...Ackerman, Grause
...ball Program
...vie Preview
...Random Panel: Jerry Bails, Roy Thomas, Julie ...Mike Friedrich, Don Glut
...ation - Showing
...ght Panel: Doug Moench, Bill Sienkiewicz, Denny

1981 Programs
(incomplete)
(TENTATIVE)

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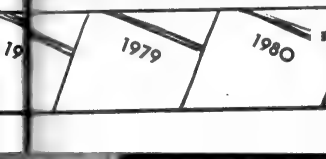
Saturday

–Movies & Cartoons all day
–Karl Hubenthal's History of Editorial Cartooning (slides)
–State of Animation Panel
–Underground Panel
–Editor's Panel: Julie Schwartz, Dick Giordano, Denny O'Neil, Len Wein, Jim Shooter, Louise Jones
–Preview of "Condorman" (new Disney film)
–Preview of New Marvel Animation
–Preview of "The Creature Wasn't Nice" (Leslie Nielson, Cindy Williams, Patrick MacNee)

Sunday

–Jack Kirby's First Kingdom Program (with music)
–Bill Woggon's Katy Keene Program
–Frank Miller's Chalk Talk
–Cerebus Fan Club Meeting
–Creator's Panel: Jack Kirby, Jack Katz, Jim Steranko, Wendy Pini, Trina Robbins, Lee Marrs
–Wendy and Richard Pini's Elfquest Show
–Jim Steranko's "Prevue"

1981 Award Night. *Left to right: John Byrne, Len Wein, Richard Pini, Chris Claremont, Terry Austin, Fred Patten, Mike Friedrich, Jim Shooter, Sam Gross, Don Glut, George Olshevsky, Shary Flenniken, Rick Geary, B. K. Taylor, Shel Dorf, David Raksin, Jerry Muller, Al Hartley, Caroline Katz, Jack Kirby, Rich Butner, Osamu Tezuka.* **Photo by Jackie Estrada.**



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I would like to take this opportunity to thank publicly all of you who have written to me personally (as well as to TCR) and even called long-distance, since #191 came out. Your support was enormously appreciated, and I will try eventually to send a personal note to all of you. For the moment, however, I am rather overwhelmed by the amount of work some of you have in store for me! I did not quite anticipate the downpour of requests -- for help in researching your theses, evaluation of your students' papers, comments on your articles -- not to mention the pleas of two very large European publishers that I write on THEIR production for TCR. I am presently staring at a stack several inches thick of materials I have to sift through before I can even begin to decide what I want to become involved in, and to what extent. And all that came in the past couple of weeks! I always knew, of course, that the American audience had long since moved beyond the "meat and potatoes" stage in its appetite for ASTERIX, et al., with numerous scholarly articles such as Christopher Pinet's in "Contemporary French Civilization"; and as I've had occasion to say before, I never had any reason to believe that TCR readers were in the rear-guard of that (or any other) movement. But even I feel rather overcome by the evidence of how lively and productive the interest in the analytical approach is out there! So please, bear with me if I appear to ignore your particular project or interest. In all probability, I DID receive your catalogue, bibliography, reprint, paper, etc.... and just haven't been able to work my way to its part of the pile yet. But I WILL get to it, unless of course, the sky falls on my head first.

Again, my sincere, if somewhat dazed, appreciation to all of you. For your support, your excellent advice, your sense of humor -- and, above all, for your abiding interest in the subject matter. - Paulette Carroll

European Comics

#14: SERIALIZATION AND NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES: HERGE'S SOLUTIONS
By Paulette Carroll

As I began to look more closely at the special narrative skills called for in a strip which is written at the same time for weekly serialization AND for album publication, it became obvious to me that the problems and the solutions were substantially different for the traditional comedy strip, the traditional adventure strip, and the very special works in which the two genres are totally integrated. For a description of the European publishing system which has imposed this balancing act between media on the Continent's major comics artists, see my column in TCR #186.

I will try to give the reader a feel for the technical and artistic answers that system has evoked by concentrating on specific examples from three of the best European strips: TINTIN, ASTERIX and Leloup's YOKO TSUNO. I have chosen them not only for their quality, but because they represent a) the three major serializing francophone weeklies which have dominated the European comics scene for so long (respectively, "Tintin," "Pilote," and "Spirou"); and b) excellent examples of the three main genres I mentioned above. I hope to shed some light today, by way of introduction, on the graphic and literary characteristics of each style of strip as it is practiced in the European tradition.

To sum up briefly the nature of the problem we are going to discuss: serialization in a weekly magazine, at the typical rate of one or two pages a week, makes it very desirable to end each installment with a "teaser" to motivate the reader to snap up the next issue. This has been a traditional practice for decades. But there are 62 pages in every TINTIN story (the pre-set album length), 48 pages for ASTERIX, 45 for YOKO TSUNO. That makes the teasers not only too frequent, but also too numerous to handle comfortably.

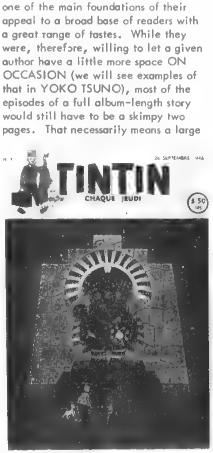
Coming up with 62 regularly-spaced baited endings, as Hergé invariably does in his page-by-page installments of TINTIN, is actually the least part of the challenge. Far more difficult is their smooth integration into the strip as a whole; the medium of the album will put any failure to meet that challenge in a particularly glaring light. Without the benefit of a forced interruption in the pace of reading, the assembled episodes could easily read like an emotional roller-coaster, the story-line interrupted with mechanical regularity by the introduction and speedy resolution of a very contrived false alarm. Something akin to a good shoot-'em-up tediously interrupted every few minutes by the predictable explosion of an inflated paper sack. Nothing could be more irritating to the reader or more detrimental to the quality of the story.

Hergé, our first example (representing "Tintin" and Casterman for media, and the integrated comedy/adventure strip for genre), clearly illustrates the first and main rule of the episodic cliff-hanger: it CANNOT be a gratuitous tease with nothing to deliver. And while it must satisfy the requirements of suspense by offering a crisis and its resolution in what will be, to the album reader, quick succession, the incident must be so thoroughly integrated into the strip that both its presence and its timing will appear to be an internal necessity of the narration. In other words, the final album will ideally give the impression that it could not possibly have been structured in any other way -- prior serialization or not.

This technique has a lot in common with that of rhyming in a poem of regular meter: at carefully measured, equal intervals, something happens which was expected by the reader and predetermined by some arbitrary rule of form. But it must seem perfectly natural. Like a good poet, Hergé has us marvelling at the fact that, whenever the time comes, the "obvious" choice happens to be a word with the proper phonetic ending. Of course, it doesn't just "happen"; making that one word, or that one incident, seem so totally natural, takes meticulous crafting and consummate artistry. Every element of the line, or page, contributes to preparing it, and is, in turn, completely integrated into the work as a whole.

I chose to discuss Hergé first not only because of chronology but because none of the other authors had to face quite as much of a challenge as he did, and no other genre besides the one he chose can provide a great artist with quite as many resources.

That will take some explaining. As I have shown in greater detail before (see TCR #186), the major francophone weeklies in which the strips were serialized aimed to offer a great variety of fare in each issue. It was one of the main foundations of their appeal to a broad base of readers with a great range of tastes. While they were, therefore, willing to let a given author have a little more space ON OCCASION (we will see examples of that in YOKO TSUNO), most of the episodes of a full album-length story would still have to be a skimpy two pages. That necessarily means a large



Hergé's cover for the first issue of "Tintin"

number of installments (rarely fewer than 15), for which a corresponding number of episode conclusions have to be written.

But Hergé is of an earlier generation than Goscinny and Leloup. When he began serializing an early version of PRISONERS OF THE SUN, there WERE no big francophone weeklies -- no big European weeklies of ANY sort by the standards to which we have become accustomed. The first issue of "Tintin" in which the story made its debut on September 26, 1946, was all of 12 pages long. It had four one-page strips, with Jacobs, Cuvelier, and Laudy joining Hergé to form the fledgling team of artists he would later refer to as "The Three Musketeers" (THEY were four also, as is well known). Three of its four color pages were given over to Hergé (the fourth to Jacob's strip on the back page), including the front cover, and an "inflated" centerspread installment of TINTIN. The larger format of the frames, and the addition in the left margin of the series of newspaper articles Tintin is reading, cannot conceal the fact that this corresponds to ONE page by both album and later serialization standards, whether you go by panel-count (14), or narrative content. Both installment and the discipline it called for. Very soon after "Tintin"'s debut, the blow-up technique was dropped, and Hergé took up his permanent station on the back page of the magazine, with the smaller panel size made familiar by his albums.

In YOKO TSUNO, we will study a typical latter-day serialization in 18 episodes. But every one of Hergé's major (post-WWII) strips was first published in more than three times as many installments. And, of course, the difficulty is compounded; it does not merely increase in proportion to the story's fragmentation. Doing a good job with an episode conclusion on every page is much more than twice as difficult as doing it well on every other page.

But by the same token, an integrated strip such as TINTIN offers its author far more resources, with the multiplicity of concurrent strands into which the loose ends of a cliff-hanger may be tucked. What IS an "integrated" strip? Basically, one which embraces both of the two major genres, comedy and adventure, without either the gags or the suspense clearly dominating. This balance of elements has a profound effect on the range of the characterization and the graphic styles made possible in such a strip, as

The first installment of PRISONERS OF THE SUN: debut of Hergé's serialization in "Tintin"

the skimpiness of the helping and the attempt to make it look larger have to be taken in their historical context: compared to today's situation, the production of top-quality strips was a mere trickle in 1946, and one could not afford to exhaust a story too quickly.

Now, as I have had occasion to mention before, Hergé is basically a rather conservative person; it was only for his latest album, PICAROS (1976), after much criticism from a new generation of fans, that he reluctantly rid Tintin of the golf trousers he still sported for FLIGHT 714 FOR SYDNEY in 1968, decades after they had disappeared from the fashion scene. Similarly, he never abandoned the tradition of the one-page

we shall see -- but its impact is even clearer on the complexity of episodic transition. To the two traditional elements of comedy and adventure, Hergé adds a "general human interest" component ranging from space exploration (MOON) to the energy crisis (BLACK GOLD) to the politics of drugs (BLUE LOTUS) to the possibility of past visits from extraterrestrials (FLIGHT 714) to lost civilizations (PRISONERS OF THE SUN). I have to MAKE myself stop; the list of fascinating topics is too long.

It is in comparison to the comedy strip ASTERIX's "travelogue" albums that the characteristics of the integrated genre represented by TINTIN become most obvious. Goscinny never tells us anything new about the countries visited by his hero, and has been roundly criticized for that by a lot of people who completely missed the point. ASTERIX does not take us to Spain or Germany to talk about the Spaniards or the "Goths," but to talk about FRENCH ATTITUDES toward these people -- to expose, and poke fun at, our own clichés. Satire is his main goal -- and that satire never leaves home. We are, as I have argued at great length in this column, always laughing at ourselves.

Tintin is not that kind of hero. But his #1 sidekick Haddock is. And so, when the two of them march off to Tibet, we have not only a wealth of accurate and fascinating background information -- a deliberate, thoroughly researched focus on the OTHER culture -- but also scenes such as the one in the Buddhist monastery, which amounts to a classical illustration of the workings of the integrated genre. While Tintin himself demonstrates the "serious" treatment of the native culture by respectfully addressing the head of the institution by his proper title of "Grand Abbot" (here, the translation loses a lot of the exotic flavor of Hergé's original "Grand Précieux" or "Grand Precious"), in a suspenseful interlude which also greatly furthers the plot, Haddock is the target of the kind of satire we will find later in ASTERIX, as he stumbles through a whole repertory of inappropriate and highly comical forms of address ranging from "Grand Panjandram" to "Grand Father," and finally, "Grand Piano." The latter free translation makes too much slapstick, I think, out of Hergé's brilliant original "Grand...Chose... Turc," in which the "Grand Thingamajig" of "Chose" prepares us for the hidden pun on "Turc/truc." ("Grand Turc" is a standard French title for the Turkish Sultan, while "Grand Truc" would be synonomous with "Grand Chose.")

Of course, here too, we are laughing at the tourist, not the native; but HERE, nobody misses the point. Ironically enough, the relatively provincial Hergé, who has been, by his own admission, guilty of REAL political and racial bias by today's standards in such early works as SOVIETS and CONGO, has never suffered the rabid accusations of xenophobia which have plagued the cosmopolitan Goscinny. The very real contrast between Astérix and Obélix remains within the confines of the comedy genre; the contrast between Tintin and Haddock straddles comedy and serious adventure.

Which is not to say that this relatively primitive role-dividing technique is Hergé's only means of achieving lite-

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gration of genres. The latter is present INSIDE the main character as well; Tintin is very deeply different from the typical protagonist of either adventure or comedy. Hergé can present intense emotional pathos with child-like simplicity, as in TIBET; his hero has neither the macho hang-ups so often highlighted by the harshly-paced action of a major adventure strip, nor the limitations of a hero of comedy or satire such as Astérix. When Astérix cries, it is more often childish than child-like; his reconciliations with Obélix give us no more intense an emotion than a warm-hearted smile.

Grotesque sobs highlight this reconciliation of Astérix and Obélix in CAULDRON, to an audience of obviously unmoved animals

When a little touch of sadness does creep in, the hero bounces right back to fight the situation. Goscinny's range of emotions was deliberately narrow. Hergé, on the other hand, can be spine-chillingly grim: the native guide suggests to Tintin that the Yeti (Abominable Snowman) might have devoured his young friend Chang, and Tintin chokes a little over the counter-argument that there would be visible traces of such a ghoulish feast. They are in the Yeti's cave at the time; in the last panel of the page, even as Tintin makes that remark, we see Milou proudly trotting towards the group with a bone in his jaws.

I tell you, Sahib: your friend came here, yes... But afterwards, yeti kill him, and eat him up.
No Thankyou. In that case there'd be...it's too horrible...some traces of ... of the tragedy.

Gruesome cliff-hanger in Hergé's TIBET

This would be totally unthinkable in a strip like ASTERIX. Not only would the tone be jarringly out of place, but it would also clash with Uderzo's graphic style. His caricatural rendering of the protagonists, which is squarely in the tradition of the European comedy strip, would make this type of intense physical realism completely grotesque. What would Obélix's humerus look like?

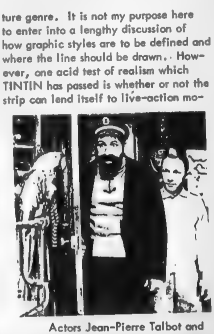
Violence in ASTERIX is confined to an unrealistic abstraction which is part of the same comedy tradition as the Saturday morning cartoons.

To recap the main distinguishing characteristics of the integrated genre: unlike Astérix, and like many adventure heroes, Tintin is never ridiculous and never wrong. We never laugh at him. Unlike Tintin, Astérix never takes us to the intense depth of emotion Hergé reaches in TIBET and elsewhere: when he sobs, it is an exaggerated, or caricatural, reaction to the situation; much ado about nothing. And we smirk. Tintin is less quick to come to tears, but when he does, he draws us completely into his emotions. Because of the extreme simplicity and economy of Hergé's effects at such moments, this will not be obvious to the reader staring at this isolated excerpt I have had to limit myself to. All of TIBET prepares that moment, and it cannot be fully appreciated out of context. But IN context, that hallmark of comedy, the reader's detachment, is completely eliminated.

Hergé's hero cries in both pain (left) and joy (right) in TIBET

One the other hand, while the adventure strip also traditionally calls for the reader's emotional involvement, Tintin is openly vulnerable in a way that is quite uncharacteristic of the archetypical protagonist of THAT genre. That point has often been explained by the editors of "Tintin" in that magazine's letter column. They felt that the apparent "realism" of the traditional adventure strip (and they have published scores of them!) is actually very superficial, and appeals paradoxically to the youngest and most naive segment of the readership. Whatever the merits of that opinion, all surveys and studies seem to confirm the fact that, in the magazine for the "age 7 to 77" crowd, the adult's favorite strips are precisely the ones twelve-year-old machos accuse of being "for babies," while the kiddies groove on the more violent action strips many adults find infantile. Adventure strips, too, can foster a certain kind of detachment -- neglecting the human element in favor of the plot -- which is equally uncharacteristic of TINTIN. Having asked myself the question for the first time as I was writing this, I was shocked to discover that I could not recall a single instance of a traditional adventure strip hero (or heroine) crying -- indeed, that I could not imagine Yoko, whom I just recently studied very closely, doing so at all. That does not mean that it never happened in the history of the genre, of course, but considering how much, how long, and how widely I have read, it can hardly be insignificant.

And, of course, TINTIN is also PCITORIALLY integrated. I mentioned in connection with the gruesome incident in TIBET that its style was basically in the realistic tradition of the adventure genre. It is not my purpose here to enter into a lengthy discussion of how graphic styles are to be defined and where the line should be drawn.. However, one acid test of realism which TINTIN has passed is whether or not the strip can lend itself to live-action mo-

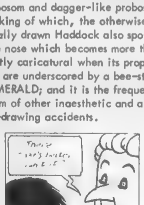


Actors Jean-Pierre Talbot and Georges Wilson portray Tintin and Haddock in the live-action motion picture TINTIN AND THE MYSTERY OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE

The international tradition of the handsome adventurer: Corto Maltese, Bernard Prince, Modesty Blaise Yoko Tsumo

tion-picture treatment. There have been several such movies, with Jean-Pierre Talbot in the title role. I understand that MODESTY BLAISE met the same test, however nauseating Monica Vitti's performance was found to be by many of the character's closest admirers. However, there are important differences between Hergé's graphic realism and that of the pure adventure strip à la Holdaway or Romero.

First, the caricatural element is far from completely absent. It is not necessarily where we might see it today: Tintin was not meant to be funny-looking. His little tuft of hair is a slightly stylized rendering of a haircut which was once as ordinary and fashionable as his famous trousers. But Calculus's bald pate and diminutive stature definitely WERE meant to be comical, as were the Thompsons' identical features, and Bianca Castafiore's formidable bosom and dagger-like proboscis. Speaking of which, the otherwise realistically drawn Haddock also sports a large nose which becomes more than slightly caricatural when its proportions are underscored by a bee-sting in EMERALD; and it is the frequent victim of other inaesthetic and attention-drawing accidents.



A contrast in nasal caricature in TINTIN: Bianca Castafiore treats a bee-sting with crushed rose-petals.

Second, it is a different kind of graphic realism from that of the pure adventure strip. In as far as it excludes glamour, it is actually more true to life. Not that glamour is completely absent from real life, but it does not come as automatically with other heroic traits as many strips would have us believe. The English Modesty Blaise, the Italian Corto Maltese (I am referring of course to the real culture of the author, not the fictional origins of the character), the Franco-Belgian Bernard Prince, are all superbly sexy; in a slightly more stylized vein, so is Yoko Tsuno. The basic rule seems to be that if you are good at catching crooks and surviving cliff-hangers, you have a great-looking bod with a face to match. O'Donnell is realistic enough to mention Modesty's numerous permanent scars in his novels, but Romero obviously air-brushes them out of the strip. NOBODY is sexy in TINTIN. It is easy to reach for the reflex answer that this is because the strip was originally produced for a young audience; but this does not hold up to scrutiny. The kiddies like good-looking heroes, as is amply demonstrated by the success so many traditional adventure strips have had with them; as for the parents, they are a lot less likely to object to an attractive character than to the treatment of such subjects as drug addiction and European sins in the Third World. Glamour, is simply not part of Hergé's graphic style, any more than it is part of Morris's LUCKY LUKE, another strip in which neither comedy nor adventure is clearly dominant.

Though these characteristics of the integrated strip are important in their own right, they are absolutely crucial when it comes to episode transition techniques. Since the key is to introduce nothing in an obtrusive and artificial manner, it follows that, in a strip in which gags are relatively rare, the teaser cannot lead into a gag without drawing attention to the contrivance. Similarly, the relatively sparce incidences of genuine, breath-taking suspense in ASTERIX cannot INVARIABLY appear at the end of a page. In a strip such as TINTIN, however, no page is entirely without comedy OR suspense; the great density of both elements makes it possible for Hergé's cliff-hangers to flow unobtrusively into either serious action, or gags, page after page. And let us not forget the intense curiosity which the human interest element can arouse in us, and of which Hergé also makes use in his episode conclusions. In short, a strip which continuously interweaves the assets of a Saturday morning cartoon, a sitcom, a National Geographic special, a James Bond movie, and 60 MINUTES, offers its authors a lot of levels on which to camouflage the obligatory suspense of serialization. The bone brought by Milou in TIBET is promptly identified as that of a chamois (a small, goatlike antelope); but the incident serves to illustrate Tintin and Haddock's intense, alert jumpiness in a particularly critical situation. When you are inside an unknown creature's den, it is natural to be plagued by false alarms. This is but one entry in the long catalogue of Hergé's episodic conclusion techniques, and a particularly ingenious one: what is artificial in most fictional contexts becomes natural in some. Hergé does not hesitate to make use of a genuine, completely misleading false alarm in the rare case when the situation not only justifies it, but makes it an asset in our understanding of what the characters are going through.

But let us now look at a more normal situation and a more typical Hergé cliffhanger. DESTINATION MOON opens as Tintin and Haddock come home to find Calculus gone under very mysterious circumstances. They receive a telegram from him asking them to join him in the fictional central-European country of Syldavia, which Hergé had created eight albums earlier for KING OTTOKAR'S SCEPTRE. (In the best tradition of Balzac, Hergé makes constant and consummate use of reappearing characters and other elements across his opus.) The mystery and suspense only grow as the heroes get closer to their destination; they are met and checked by increasing armies of security personnel at each stage of the journey, and when they finally drive into what looks like the garage of a mountain villa, they find themselves in a series of underground tunnels, the entry to an enormous secret industrial complex. Finally welcomed by meek-looking Wolff, who claims to be Calculus's assistant, they are rid of the gun-toting characters Haddock refers to as "gangsters" (Wolff smilingly assures him that they are "Zeppo" men, which is not entirely reassuring, as he refuses to elaborate for the moment), and are at long last taken to their friend. Of course, this represents a carefully dosed and prepared climax of concern for the latter's safety. What is he up to? Does he realize it himself? Readers of previous albums have every reason to worry, for Calculus is, and remains, the scatter-

brained, vulnerable, naive genius Tintin and Haddock forever have to rescue from the world -- as they did, for example, in PRISONERS OF THE SUN. The purely graphic last panel of the page is a beautiful example of the Hergé cliff-hanger. With what looks like a glass

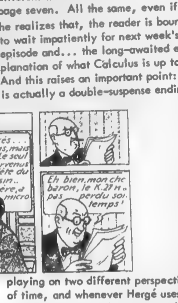
Tintin and Haddock's first glimpse of Calculus in DESTINATION MOON, at the end of page seven

dome on his head, the professor looks up at a man who has a vicious expression on his face and a mallet in his hand. Calculus's ineffectively raised left hand seems to plead for mercy. The shock and puzzlement of the main characters is clearly expressed by the jagged exclamation and question marks. Wolff's reaction is one of less alarmed surprise, but that is hardly reassuring, because it shows that the supposed assistant of the professor has no idea what is going on. I have asked Mike and Jerry to contrive to place the next panel on a non-facing page of TCR to give readers some feel for what it is like to see this episode conclusion in isolation. Before you turn the page, try to imagine the worry and suspense generated here for a reader who is deeply involved in the story and intensely interested in its main element of suspense so far: Calculus's fate.

And then, the hammer does come down. This is VERY important. The literal truth of the teaser panel is respected, the literal conclusion IS delivered. The twist is in the INTERPRETATION of the situation: this is a test of the shatter-proof material of the peculiar head-gear. Why is this so important? Because if Hergé did not deliver on the literal level, he would kill future suspense. The kids (when this was first serialized in the early fifties, they comprised the majority of his audience) would soon detect the fakery. Perhaps the hammer is made of rubber; the man is really aiming it at something else to the side, etc. This kind of speculation has two basic characteristics: 1) the solution is actually present, at least in theory, in that last panel: if you could walk in and touch the hammer, or step to the side and see the large spider behind Calculus, etc...., you would no longer be worried. Enact it in three dimensions and then freeze it, and you would be able to resolve it in a few minutes. NOT SO. And because there is no simplistic trick of this sort involved (something the faithful reader soon learns), the puzzlement is very real. 2) In the case of the rubber hammer or the spider, the situation would be completely resolved in the first panel of the next page. It is a very simple, and very quick transition from suspense to "normalcy," and there isn't much relationship between the rhyme and the rest of the line. Again, this is not so. Both Calculus's position and the conventional multi-colored stars testify to the strength of the impact of the hammer. And the only relief this first panel brings is the knowledge that Calculus is not in any immediate danger at the hands of the grim-faced man. We know even LESS than before what the hell is going on. And so, the resolution of the cliff-hanger itself actually INCREASES our puzzlement rather than decreasing it. It adds another bizarre and unexplained event to the long string we have witnessed since the opening of the story.

But actually, this last incident represents a progression. At the same time as we get our first view of Calculus -- whose role, in this two-album story, is that of chief scientist in charge of the world's first manned flight to the Moon -- we are given the first SPECIFIC clue of his mission. Not that it is clear enough to give anything away, but after witnessing a string of security measures which could mean a wide variety of things, we have just seen what is in fact a test of a space helmet. Calculus was on the verge of explaining the whole project, in the first panel of the last row, when Hergé interrupts him to give us a glimpse of two very suspicious

Bref, nous ne sommes pas très avancés... le Mammouth translte, nous le savons, mais où en est-il exactement?... Mystère... Le seul document précis que nous sommes parvenus à nous procurer, c'est la fiche complète du personnel employé au Grand Hangar... Notre agent K 21, qui est au Ministère, a réussi à la photographier sur micro-film... Voici cette liste

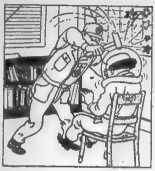


characters in Syldavia's capital engaged in what appears to be (and actually, as we find out later, IS) espionage on Calculus's activities. Hergé uses that technique several times in this particular story, and it is an excellent example of the type of teaser which is specifically adapted to a particular subject-matter.

Meanwhile, the hammer-blow on the "head-gear" is not simply allowed to fall flat. Alerted by the interruption, Calculus turns around, and is so elated to see his old friends that he flies into Haddock's arms, forgetting about the helmet, and crushing the famous nose in the page's first gag.

Suspense flows into gag in the space-helmet test incident

This is immediately followed by an apologetic explanation about the impact resistance test (complete integration of the gag into the story-line), to which Haddock replies "It IS impact-resistant, believe me!" (back to gag). Naturally, Tintin asks the next logical question: what is it for? And the explanation, which plays on the comedy of Calculus's partial deafness (second gag of the page), is thus drawn out sufficiently to be postponed in the manner I have already described (back to suspense). There is no resolution of the spying cliff-hanger in the next (ninth) page and episode, but then, this is a long-term suspense, very different in nature from the ending of page seven. All the same, even if he realizes that, the reader is bound to wait impatiently for next week's episode and... the long-awaited explanation of what Calculus is up to. And this raises an important point: this is actually a double-suspense ending, playing on two different perspectives of time, and whenever Hergé uses the long-range teaser of espionage, he couples it with a short-range suspense element such as the one on page eight. Naturally, once more, he delivers -- completely and honestly. There will be no toying with the reader, at least



Hergé "delivers" in the first panel of page 8 of DESTINATION MOON

To your health, sir! Ah! Ah! Ah! Passengers for the moon, please board the cars! I mean the rocket! For you will be passengers, I presume!
!?
!

to Europeans: "Passengers for the Moon, please board the cars... I mean, the rocket! For you WILL take passengers, I presume?" (By this time, tears are streaming down his contorted face.) Last panel: "Of course I will," replies the unperterbed Calculus. "Why do you think I've asked you to join me here?"

Release from the original suspense about Calculus's projects leads naturally to comedy, and quickly back into more intense suspense in Hergé's DESTINATION MOON.

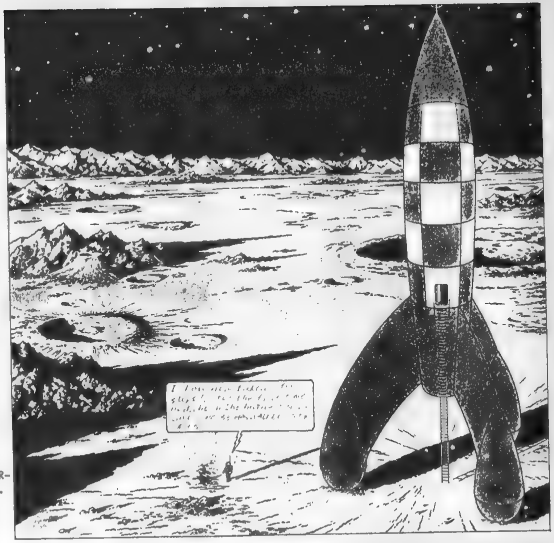
Game point.

And a superb example of Herbé's handling of the "rhyming suspense": on the same page which finally and completely relieves us of our long built-up worry about the safety of Calculus, Hergé concludes by delivering the blow which jeopardizes the safety of ALL our beloved characters. This is the end of the carefully structured story's introduction: the MAIN plot element of the two albums has been established, and we begin here our

not of such a primitive kind. By the end of page nine, we know essentially EVERYTHING about Calculus's plans. A hearing-aid eliminates the delays caused by communication problems, and five panels from the end, in a page which contains an astounding amount of text, the professor delivers the punchline. The organization he has carefully described aims to land a manned rocket on the Moon. Or at least we THINK this is the punchline, for Hergé is never through surprising us. Four panels are devoted to the Captain's hilarity. He thinks it is a good joke, and his witticisms furnish the page's main comedy; finally, he mimicks the train-station announcement so familiar

abiding concern for the safety of the heroes in what we know to be their most fantastic adventure ever.

Obviously, there is much more to say about Hergé's transitions; as a matter of fact, I would love to devote an entire book to them. Every time I return to TINTIN, I rediscover anew, and with new astonishment, the fact that this remains for me, after half a lifetime, the best strip I have ever laid eyes on -- so far beyond the many other creations that I love that it actually takes my breath away. Specifically, every time I re-read it attentively (and I first saw DESTINATION MOON in its original serialization at the turn of the fifties, when I could



The medium of the album allows for "special effects" in the form of extra-large, spectacular panels. These two examples, each measuring 19 x 18.5 cm, are from EXPLORERS OF THE MOON.

barely read), I discover so much, that it is as if I had NEVER read it before. In this story alone, there is enough material in the episode transitions to feed a long series of columns. But I trust this more or less randomly-selected example (the hammer-blow page is the one to which my album happened to open when I first pulled it off the shelf to start my research for this column), will have given the reader a good idea of the sort of prowess the technical constraints of serialization have inspired in Hergé.

One more example, to illustrate an element left out on pages seven to nine of DESTINATION: general human interest. One of the cliff-hangers I remember most vividly from my childhood occurs in the second volume of the story, EXPLORERS ON THE MOON. Tintin stands in the air-lock, the outside door opens; the Moonscape is about to be revealed for the first time. The last panel in "Tintin" shows the anguished face of the flight director and a controller as the hero's long "OOOOOH" comes over the radio. A number of things could have gone wrong, of course, and we are intensely worried about Tintin's safety; I was a nervous wreck until the following Tuesday. Yet, we do not feel the least bit "cheated" when we find out that Tintin had been "merely" overcome by the awesomeness of the spectacle; Hergé's skill at conveying this haunting, extraordinary experience in words is so great that we share it; to tell the truth, it far surpassed the VERBAL drama of the "real thing" nearly two decades later.

Incidentally, this is one of the rare instances of a change in rhythm between serialization and album. In the latter, this "cliff-hanger" occurs at the end of the next-to-last row. The displacement is due to the occasional use, in the album, of gigantic (e.g. more than half a page) panels which are not possible in the magazine, but add a very neat special effect. Such a frame appeared on page 23, and was used again on page 25, to show the hero's first steps on the surface; hence the shift on page 24. We return to the original rhythm on page 26.

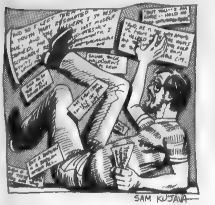
Next time, a very different treatment of the same question in a very different strip: LE TRIO DE L'ETRANGE, the first story of the adventure series YOKO TSUNO.

A Comic Reader

By Sam Kujava

I am that rare bird. Twenty-six years old and still an unabashed follower and fancier of the COMIC BOOK. And I'll not apologize for my unflagging interest. Age, then and now, is unimportant. The detractors of comics call them kiddie-books, say they are meant only for the very young. I believe, rather, that one of the best parts of our otherwise tormented ego is the childlike persona, which yearns for the simple, the bold, the direct and the positive. Children of all ages have found such qualities in comic books for nearly five decades. By keeping tabs on comics as I've grown into conventional adulthood, I've also kept in touch with my innocent flip side.

My continuing affection for comics could be intellectualized, as is popular form these days among a brace of columnists for another fanzine. A little bit of this here and there can make for fun reading. But the unrelenting and strident tone of these writers gives me another message. After hundreds of pages of this sort of "gray matter ex-



ercise," I hear one collective voice ring out, "We are grown-ups! We don't really feel comfortable anymore reading comics. In fact, we're quite embarrassed! So we will justify this childish affectation by writing copious dissertations. If we write with knitted brow and sincere heart, with the fervor of a college revolutionary, you will not notice our embarrassment and adult unease!"

But the fault-finding and nit-picking has gone on with such dulling regularity that we DO notice. I enjoy much of THE COMICS JOURNAL immensely, and I'd never demand that they soften their tough editorial policy. It saddens me, however, that some of their talented writers seemingly have not come to grips with their basic, non-pretentious feeling about comic books. Is it no longer fashionable, or profitable to speak of the good things that comics are, and CAN BE? There has been too little constructive criticism of late, and too much angry gnashing of teeth.

Today's comic book IS flawed in numerous instances, technically and creatively. In this and future columns I shall not blithely ignore such flaws. Let sweetness and light flow from the silver tongues of company flunkies. I won't wound the harmless comic book with my words, for it is but a commercial product, as fashioned by people of varying talent, ambition and enthusiasm.

My yardstick for critiquing comics has always been the care and devotion, or lack thereof, of those few who produce them. If those qualities are not present or diminished, the cleverest writing, most detailed artwork and handsomest printing won't make that comic a worthwhile entertainment. This column's direction, therefore, will be to voice my opinions and hopes, and those, I believe, of a vast majority of caring COMIC READERS, to those in the industry open-minded enough to listen.

CAPTIONED COMMENTS

A decade ago, comic book captions were barely noticable. They were usually insignificant little boxes, colored white or yellow, containing phrases like "Meanwhile," or "Later that day." Almost without fail, they were located in the upper left-hand corner of a panel, and infrequently at that!

But all good, dependable things must come to an end. I'll admit it was subtle at first. A bored colorist substituting pink or blue for the traditional hues did not excite me. A frustrated letterer breaking up a verbose Don McGregor caption into three smaller captions had my sympathy. Lo and behold, when we had been lulled into complacency, a new style of writing came into vogue, its foundations being the wordy, multi-captioned panel. The more panels per page, the better! This has been, I feel, to the detriment of storytelling. Why? My straining, squinting eyes provide the evidence!

I won't judge the quality of the writer's work. I CAN'T, honestly, for in many cases I just can't READ the bloody things! Truthfully, the printing quality of comic books is not as sharp as it was ten years ago, before the switch was made to the more economical plastic printing plate. So why don't the industry people involved in producing a page of comic art work with this in mind? Writers, if you persist in your "everything-including-the-kitchen-sink" brand of wordsmithing, then the harried letterers will have to continue to letter each page using smaller and smaller characters, making more likely the running together of letters and ink blockage which makes the thing into a bloody grey blur. Colorists, I applaud your efforts to bring variety to this multitude of captions by endowing them with new and different hues! But, for God's sake, BROWN? PURPLE? And the ever-dreaded reverse caption, WHITE letters on a BLACK background? The wrong colors obscure the words, the black background clogs the white letters, making reading a chore. My strongest plea is to the editors of these muddled efforts. You've a right to try something new. But I'll be damned if you're learning from your mistakes! This has been going on for quite a while. The first time one of these babies landed on your desk, I would have thought that some directives might have been made for some quality control: stay away from certain colors, keep lettering a certain size, remind writers that they're being paid by the page, not the word... On that subject, why pay the writers good money and turn around and, by not making decisions, render certain captions unreadable, thus disrupting the flow of an entire story? What a silly way to carry on a business!

THE LATEST READS

The ARAK/SON OF THUNDER insert in WARLORD #48 has left me un-

dazzled. If this advance preview i example of DC's newest barbarian t then we're in for some dull times. A another short-run DC title. Oh, I like Roy Thomas's story concept. It would be glib of me to call it Conan meets Prince Valiant, no? The art lacks verve, unfortunately, with De Zuniga and his assistants inking awo the sharpness that the writing sang v On the other hand, in that same co book, I thrilled to the excellent tal of artist Tom Yeates on the CLAW b up strip. I never have enjoyed CLA so much, and it is due largely to the knock-out job young Yeates did in these eight pages. So other-worldly was his depiction of Claw's world ar its fantastic denizens, so romantical heroic was Tom's style, that I genuil looked forward to the next chapter! Arak? I suppose I'll give it another try. Perhaps, though, Yeates shoul be the one illustrating the new DC t and Colon/DeZuniga can labor in th back pages of WARLORD.

THE DEFENDERS #98, August, -- This will go down in my memory one of the worst-executed comic bo covers of all time. Everyone involv was asleep at the switch, to let this horror slip by. But I'm more concer with the appearance therein of that tried-and-true second-string Marvel whatsit, the Macabre Man-Thing.

Is there anyone who does not fe sympathy for Ted Sallis, the modern mad scientist/unfortunate who fell victim to his own Super-Soldier form la? For ten years now, The Man-Thing has shuffled like an overgrown rutabaga through any number of Mar vel titles as well as two series of hi own. The brainless but empathic

THE DOZER
I WAS SO BORED UP IN ASCOT, I'VE DECIDED TO COMB DESTROY THEY DOZER!
PREPARE TO DIE!!!
HOWDY! I WORKS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THOUGHT I'D BE FRIENDLY
ARRGH!
Excitement spells DOOM
SEE! I TOLD YOU I'D FIND THEM
I'M FALLIN WOOOOW!
HA! 'TIS I-- EXMEDDON! I'VE COME TO MAKE TRY LIFE MISERABLE DOZER-RIFF!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
VOT DER HECK IST WROONK WITH DEM I VONDER!
Well...YA GET THE IDEA!
CHARACTERS © 1981 MARVEL COMICS GROUP

swamp vegetable was never of star quality; it was more effective as the misunderstood monster of the month. Indeed, in his own title, Man-Thing mostly stood by while the current human guest-stars eloquently emoted their own personal soap operas.

In MAN-THING #11, the last book in the second series, I really hoped that writer Claremont would top off his off-the-wall tale with a real ending to the Ted Sallis/Man-Thing mess. Maybe he was ordered to keep the character "alive," as it were, for future cameo shots. Whatever the reason, I felt let down. If Richard Kimble could find the one-armed man, why couldn't an unimportant comic character have a final denouement?

On the heels of that disappointing final issue came DEFENDERS #98. Doctor Strange is involved again, as he magically enters the soul of a naked Ted Sallis, the human representation of Manny's soul, called forth by Doc's magic!

After the fight ends, Strange admits again that it is impossible for his magic to "cure" Sallis, but he adds that he could restore Ted's consciousness, or at least bring it to the fore, and control Man-Thing's body, so that together the two of them could work to find a permanent cure! My mind was swimming at this point! What a tremendous idea! It gives the Man-Thing a DAMN GOOD REASON and whole new impetus to survive a bit longer in the Marvel World!

But writer J.M. DeMatteis completely misses the opportunity to do something WORTHWHILE with a worthless character. Sallis, afraid of FAILURE, asks to be sent back "down into darkness, where I can at least know the peace of oblivion!" What an awe-inspiring model for children everywhere! I'm afraid to even try to live for fear of failure so let me live in mindless limbo! What wishy-washy donkey dung! The last sound we hear from Ted Sallis is the echo of his pathetic whimper. How well that phrase also sums up the strength of DeMatteis's latest writing attempt.

Ending on a positive note, I'd like to recommend ARAK #1 (much better than the preview), DAREDEVIL by writer/artist Frank Miller (you've all discovered him by now) and KRONOS, in ROOK Magazine, by writer/artist Lee Elias (you've probably missed this, and you're in for a wonderful surprise!) - SK

Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12:12

By Gary Ricker

1:2 - "all is vanity," 12:12 - "of the making of books there is no end..."

IN GENERAL

BEM No. 30,32. Martin Lock, 3 Marlow Ct., Britannia Sq., Worcester, WR1 3DP ENGLAND. $2.25, 5/$11. Checks payable to Steven R. Johnson.

Can't say I like these as much as last time out -- which makes BEM better than only, oh, 75% of the upscale U.S. zines, instead of 90%. Good, if business-technical Paul Levitz interview in #30, which is recommended very highly. Maybe ole Stan Lee is right, we shouldn't be interested in the business end of comics -- they're not really for us big people after all -- but Levitz speaks with refreshing candor, without malice and carping.

CEREBUS THE NEWSLETTER. Fred Patten, 11863 West Jefferson Blvd., Culver City, CA 90230. 4 quarterly issues included in $5 fan club membership.

Dunno about you, but Cerebus's being a BARBARIAN aardvark never made much of an impression on me. Good barbarian art ended for me when John Buscema introduced Conan to Elvis Presley's doctor. This newsletter features a nice two-color cover that's far more effective than many of the new four-color ostensible slickzines -- and very little else of note. Still, membership entitles you to as-yet-unseen posters, cards and assorted aardvarkmania. I still want to see people making a living doing what they enjoy doing, so I urge you to subscribe to this AND CEREBUS.

COMICS '81 No. 13-17. Brian R. Flynn, 9012 Evergreen Drive, Mentor, OH 44060. 50¢, 12/$2.

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Small xeroxed newsletter featuring short items on comics, video, fanzines and paperbacks.

COMICS NEWSLINE No. 18. Frank Verzyl, P.O. Box 711, Lindenhurst, NY 11757. 50¢, 12/$4.

Splendid tabloid newszine featuring Marvel and DC news along with large (3 1/2" by 5") cover repros. Bimonthly frequency may preclude coverage of those exciting white-collar personnel changes, but comics coverage looks good.

COMICS FEATURE No. 10. New Media Publishing, Inc., 12345 Starkey, Largo, FL 33543. $1.95, 12/$15.00.

This one has finally hit stride (although covers still are awful -- why don't all of you with the resources to produce full-color covers talk to your printers, or, failing that, an experienced commercial art studio about reproduction, bluelines, reverses and doublebums? Bring samples -- what you'd like your cover to look like, be it LIFE or SQUA TRONT -- and find out what it would take to duplicate that effect. Many times it is just knowing what to ask for. End of lecture -- I'm not singling NMP out either.) Gee, what an issue -- the news is out of date by the time CF hits the comic shops -- but oh! the features! Stern and Byrne's Captain America, unpublished pencils; a short but precious page with the great Joe Simon, reflecting on his flag-draped idol; vintage wonder from Don and Maggie Thompson; an interview with Dick Giordano's only competition in the Nicest Guy In Comics contest, E. Nelson Bridwell. Wait, there's more -- a fine brief Fawcett/Quality article by grand old fan Chuck Wooley; a bit of a Murphy Anderson interview and a wonderful short story by Peter Gillis dealing with comic book sex objects. A lot of enjoyment without a portfolio price. I feel like Gene Shalit.

FUTURE GOLD No. 7. Geoffrey Schutt, 4146 Marlaine Drive, Toledo, OH 43606. $1.50, 6/$8.50.

I'll never forget that day as long as I live -- I was just a boy, in a large metropolitan bookstore, browsing. In a fit of inspiration I found myself in the "Games-Hobbies" section.. Like I said, I'll never forget it -- I stood on tiptoe and pulled down a thick trade paperback -- it fell open at my feet and I gasped in childish wonder and glee at its gray columns of numbers. I collected these things with a fervor and kept 'em in a box under my bed, re-reading them, trading with buddies. Yep, the COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE changed my life. Geoff Schutt's too, I guess. A fanzine of investment information. Non-scatalogical words fail me.

Bush, 114 E. Main, Norman, OK 73069. $1.50.

This is an all-art issue, featuring Howie Post and Warren Kremer on Casper, Spooky, Felix, Little Lotta, et al., in reduced full-page halftones with short, gushing captions. Murky repro, over-blown praise and a high price for 32 black and white 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 inch pages. I realize the editors of THC will groan, but with Carl Barks the joy is in the reading, not the discussing -- I enjoyed last issue's Harvey discussions, but now seeing (and recalling) the art, I realize I haven't experienced the cumulative effect the editors have.

MAGICAL BLEND No. 1,3. Magical Blend, P.O. Box 11303, San Francisco, CA 94101. $3.00, 4/$10.00.

I've seen this one listed by dealers, who describe it as beautiful. Many of the current crop of Hollywood lovelies (male and female) could be described as beautiful, too, but many of them appear to have guacamole for brains. MB #1's theme is, um, hoodoo: astrology, the occult, auras, karma. Number two is ostensibly about whales and dolphins, with writers remembering how they crawled out of the briny deep and left their cetacean buddies behind. I don't do drugs, and I refuse to buy them for the purpose of reviewing. So there.

STRIP SCENE No. 14. Remuda Publishing, 6312 Crowchild Tr. SW, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T3E 5R5. $1.50, 4/$5.00.

Still a fine, friendly fanzine. The subject is adventure strips and SS is packed with heavily-illustrated articles and checklists. Strip collectors are quite determined not to let their hobby become overrun with investors and voyeurs like other allied fields -- and with the impending extinction of the adventure strip, the hobby should remain small and friendly for some time to come. Fine articles on the Caniff-Sickles-ish PATSY, advertising strips, TERRY, and much more. Did I say I like this? Okay.

WHIZZARD No. 14. Marty Klug, 5730 Chatport Road. St. Louis, MO 63129. $2.45.

Perhaps the final issue of a fine fanzine. Behind the lovely Nasser-Austin Martian Manhunter cover (marred by a blurb) there are two good interviews with Paul Gulacy and Dick Giordano, including a nice centerspread of Gulacy photo-conversions. Marty cites tardy contributions and his waning interest in comics as the reason for his imminent gafiation. I hope he'll reconsider.

WILDCAT No. 78. Wildcat, 415 W. Brady, Tulsa, OK 74103. $1.00, 4/$3.50.

Art, articles, strips and fiction in an odd newsprint melange, for example: an article on Ozark heritage; swashbuckled fiction; illustration of indescribable crustacean by art student who carries a ray gun; train wreck article; short piece on manners; recipe for barley-oat pie crust. I probably should mention the ad for a new hand pump that changes auto-engine oil through the dip-stick hole. If I may quote George Gobel: "...ever feel like the world's a tuxedo and you're a pair of brown shoes?"

STRIPZINES

BAH, HEMBECK! Fantaco Enterprises, Inc., 21 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12210. $1.25.

Feisty Fred Hembeck takes on DC and Marvel -- their heavyweights, actually: Superman and the FF -- in a thoughtful, amusing, nostalgic and exhaustive illustrated essay. Splendid recountings of DC's childlike wonder days, Stan and Jack's Marvel Age, products of the silence between Korea and Viet Nam. If not for the multiplicity of Marvel reprints (will DC's inspired goofiness ever see the light of day again?), this slim volume might have been as important to this generation of collectors as Feiffer's GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES was to mine. Buy an extra copy to give to the person in your life who says he USED to read comics. Sincere thanks, Fred.

ECONOTOONS. Dollars and Sense, 38 Union Square, Somerville, MA 02143. $1.00.

This is an odd one -- a slick-paper collection of illustrations and editorial cartoons on the subject of (so help me) socialist economics. Artist Nick Thorkelson has a nice grasp of light and shade, so this might make a nice reference for budding cartoonists.

IMAGINEX COMIX No. 1,2. Sudsy Publications, 315 N. Main St., Swanerton, OH 43558. $2.50 the two.

Excuse me, but what is happening in Ohio? Boy -- aged nine to twelve -- and his dad team up for two issues of a stripzine. Boy can't draw. Father writes lines like "...you cruddy cretin," and "Murder is too good for the likes of you..." Pop can't letter too well, either. My dad died late last year. He had a son raised on the writings of Sherwood Anderson, Stan Lee, and William Saroyan. The father and son did many things together when the boy was young. Things went wrong. The boy grew up. The father and son grew apart. In the end the father died, alone, his son over a thousand miles away. The son's alone now, too. I guess what I'm trying to say is if your

father's alive, tell him you love him. Do things together. Enjoy one another's company. Just don't charge admission, okay?

SMILIN' ED No. 2, 3. FantaCo Enterprises, Inc. 21 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12210. $1.25, $1.75 by mail.

#2 is fandom's favorite rat in a "big house" send-up -- while I enjoyed SE #1's raw energy, #2 is mostly just crude, for my taste. #3 is right back up there, though, concentrating on horror movies -- funny, big time comics have done satires on various popular culture genres -- but I haven't felt such freshness since the old, old MADs.

STARFIGHTERS No. 2. Ken Landgraf, 315 E. 21st Street, Apt. 7H, New York, NY 10010. $2., 6/$7.50.

Fascist thud-rock music meets youthful pals of Neal Adams. Result: long-hairs in boots and tights brandishing seven- and eleven-string guitars, slogging through plots as exciting as an REO Speedwagon album. Where's Snapper Carr when you need him?

WOODWORK No. 1. Seagate Distributors, Inc., Box 177, Brooklyn, NY 11224. $5.00.

Here I go, sounding like the great Vince Davis's COMIC BOOK FANS poster of another era: why can't somebody write for Wally Wood? I mean, single-digit DAREDEVILs were a long time ago. With all the WITZENDs and much of the soft porn since, all I've done with Wood is look, LOOK! (And no, I'm not slighting his EC work.) Beautiful women, dynamic men, comics that worked IN SPACE (3-D, I mean, not Hollywood's hot property) -- and all we get these days is reprints. Wood, Ditko and Kirby are alive. Life ain't fair.

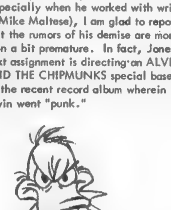
Cel Break

By Jim Korkis

THE ANATOMY OF A GREAT STORY. Last column I mentioned that the Disney organization was planning a half-hour Saturday morning television series of MICKEY MOUSE cartoons for CBS. Well, they were but now they are not. It seems that at the last minute the financial arrangements became unsatisfactory and the Disney organization pulled the show even though 210 old cartoons had already been edited on videotape for this new format. (Animation fan Marcus Wielage commented that the editing "removed all the stereotypes, racial jokes, violence and...humor." Even more frightening was the fact that many of the titles for the cartoons were also edited in order to save time.) Shortly afterwards, Disney made arrangements to syndicate the show but at the last minute those negotiations broke down. Now the story seems to be that Disney has offered the series to the foreign market where it will be distributed next year and in another year or so it will once again be offered to the United States. All of this activity happened within the span of a month or two which only goes to show that news can be true when you report it and then change even before the typewriter keys cool down.

RUBY SPEARS DESTROYS "ARTWORK?" The Taft Broadcasting Corporation ordered and carried out the destruction of the entire output of animation artwork done by the Ruby Spears organization before their recent takeover by the conglomerate. Citing copyright problems and legal questions arising from the use of comics characters in animation, as well as a misunderstanding of the goals of ASIFA (The International Animation Society who wished to obtain some cels for its archives and fund-raising activities), Jeff Cook of Ruby Spears proceeded with the destruction of hundreds of boxes of animation material. No specific figures were available, but it is thought that hundreds of thousands of cels were involved, representing the animation done on half a dozen Saturday morning television series. (This incident is not quite as bad as the time Jack Warner ordered the destruction of all the artwork for the Warner Bros. cartoons because he felt the studio needed more storage area and, after all, the cartoon department had already been closed down.)

CHUCK JONES IS ALIVE AND WELL. With the recent deaths of animation greats Tex Avery, Mike Maltese, Paul Smith, etc., there has been great concern about some of the other past masters. Rumors have been circulating for quite some time about Chuck Jones and they recently flared once again when Jones closed down his studio and moved out of the L.A. area to healthier climes. Several people knew that Jones was having health problems and feared the worst. However, that seems not to be the case. A recent letter to the animation uni newsletter from Jones clears up the r mors. Apparently, he did have seve health problems (which I don't think need to be revealed here) but the brilliant surgeons at UCLA seem to have corrected all the problems and Jones is looking forward to doing sixty to ninety minutes of new anime production work this coming year, but now only as an independent producer-writer-director. Since Jones has always been my favorite director (especially when he worked with wri er Mike Maltese), I am glad to repo that the rumors of his demise are mo than a bit premature. In fact, Jone next assignment is directing an ALVI AND THE CHIPMUNKS special base on the recent record album wherein Alvin went "punk."



SATURDAY MORNING FEVER. On the new LONE RANGER/TARZA ZORRO ADVENTURE HOUR (done by Filmation), they are going to cut dow the old episodes of Tarzan and The Lone Ranger to fifteen minutes each, leaving a half-hour for Zorro. There will be a few new episodes of Lone Ranger made. (By the way, the voic of LR is William "Nero Wolfe" Conra who is listed in the closing credits as Bill Daronc. Conrad was also the na rator on the old BULLWINKLE series. The new animated SHAZAM show wil be faithful to the C.C. Beck comic book except for the fact that the Cap tain, Mary Marvel, Marvel Jr. and Uncle Dudley all live in the same house which serves as their central base of operations. Also in the planning stages now is a THUNDARR spin off which would take place in the sa time period but focus on different lea characters. (Speaking of pilots, Mar

Productions did presentations for animated series based on GET SMART and SHA NA NA, but got turned down by the networks. Hanna-Barbera did presentations for TEEN TITANS and DIAL "H" FOR HERO that didn't sell.)

ANIMATION APA. Apa means amateur press association and basically an apa is an organization where members print a certain predetermined number of their own contribution and send it to an official editor (or central mailer) who collates these contributions and then mails each contributor a copy of all the contributions. Clear? There are apas devoted to comic books, children's literature, mystery fandom, etc. But there has never been an apa for animation fans. Well, now there is. Dan Marstein and GiGi Dane were sitting around one day and decided it would be a good idea to start one so ANITOONS was born and the first issue is to be mailed out in July. The membership will be limited in the number of people eligible to participate, but if you are interested, you might send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Dan Markstein, 3433 W. Sierra Vista, Phoenix, AZ 85017.

MARK EVANIER STRIKES AGAIN. Mark Evanier is a prolific writer for television, comic books, magazines and animated cartoons. He is currently scripting two ABC WEEKEND SPECIALS. The first one is MICKY'S CHRISTMAS. Nope, it's not about the famous mouse and the missing "e" is intentional. It's based on a short story by Arthur Baron about a little girl who journeys hundreds of miles to sell a giant Christmas tree to Rockefeller Center so that she can keep her family together. The other project by Mark is VAMPIRE VABBIT based on the children's book BUNNICULA (Bunny plus Dracula, get it?) by Deborah and James Howe about a dog and a cat who have a rabbit move into their house. They suspect the rabbit's a vampire who's sucking the tomatoes in the neighbor's garden dry. (One assignment Mark probably won't take is the third STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE special being done by a small West Coast commercial animation company called Kinney-Vallis. Mark was offered the job, but he's just too busy.)

THE RETURN OF JAY WARD. The old FRACTURED FLICKERS episodes have been edited onto videotape for distribution on pay-TV. Check your local listings. And there is a rumor that a new BULLWINKLE pilot has been put together featuring new connecting segments and a previously-unsold Ward cartoon pilot, FANG, THE WONDER DOG.

DUMBO FLIES AGAIN. DUMBO, made in 1941, will become the first animated feature from Walt Disney Studios to be released to the home-video market. A cassette of the film will be made available on a rental-only basis beginning in June. According to a spokesman for Walt Disney Home Video, consumers can expect to rent the cassette for seven to eight dollars. The cassettes are supposedly treated to keep consumers from making copies of the film. (CBS has announced that DUMBO will be shown as a feature, separate from the new WALT DISNEY PRESENTS series, next season.) This is my favorite Disney animated feature.

VARIETY REPORTS. VARIETY reported that should the writers-directors' strike prevent the season from beginning on time, a contingency plan from NBC calls for a half-hour adult-humor animated series called HANNA-BARBERA'S JOKE BOOK. (One of my sources informed me that it would be animated "NEW YORKER-type" cartoons, so make your own guesses as there is no other information at this time.)

I'm always interested in receiving corrections, additions and new information. You can contact me at the following address: Jim Korkis, 707 West Doran, Glendale, California 91203.

[Continued from page 15]

this probably explains its ratings surge this year. The first big fault I find is that the narration has become too linear in progression. There are no longer any sub-plots, no throwaways, and very little else besides their Crusade-of-the-Week. Second, they've fallen into the TV plotting trap: instant resolution. It used to be that Hawkeye and B.J. (or whomever, actually) would be presented with a problem of some sort at the beginning of the program, and would use the entire half-hour to build to climax and resolution. Now, however, the problem grows for the entire half-hour, only to be instantaneously-solved, usually through luck, in the last two minutes of the show. And all the principals are in the same room together practically all the time (usually the mess tent or Potter's office, when not in O.R.), which strikes me as unlikely for a group of people in such concentrated quarters. Plus, Hawkeye never dates anymore, though he tries, and is usually treated like a buffoon by the nurses. And the emphasis on puns is too great. I find myself wearying of writing about M*A*S*H, though I could go on and on. Tune it out, and watch HILL STREET BLUES instead. Or watch HAPPY DAYS which has had to become funny this season to overcome the loss of Ron Howard.

[Those of you asking what this conversation is doing in TCR can simply look at the many instances of the creators of strips leaving them after they become bored. The difficulties of replacements in duplicating the quality (or even the qualities) of the original are identical, despite the fact that TV shows often have the same cast under different creative control.

I think that, for the first six seasons or so at least, M*A*S*H was a perfect television program. For that reason, the hurt we fans feel by the falling sensitivity of the producers and cast to what they're rapidly doing to their show is that much greater than those who never cared at all. That's why we criticize. In comparison, there are plenty of sitcoms (and dramas) which are far poorer. We've all experienced the same thing with our favorite strips.

My beef, other than the absence of Gene Reynolds, who knew what makes good sitcom (the operative word here; M*A*S*H has last most of its sitcom qualities), having done a lot of them, good and bad, over the years, is that Alan Alda is tired of the old Hawkeye and has attempted to fashion a new character. Allowing his hair to turn grey, his character to become the ludicrous letcher instead of the handsome and desirable letcher, and his speech pattern to change from Groucho Marx to Jack E. Leonard, are just a few of the clues. The other problems, such as the absence of Radar's innocent tenderness and the alteration of Margaret's character from enemy to friendly (if strident) colleague, as well as the sad focus on the Little League acting talents of Jamie Farr (who should never have gone beyond supporting character), have just added up to one confused and non-directed mess. I once looked forward to the final, war-is-over episode as a capper to a fine series; now I look forward to it as the relief to a painful illness. MT]

TCR Top 100 Comic Books

This mo.	Last mo.	Title, number Publisher, format, special features, price if not 50c	No. Sold
1	15*	WHAT IF? No. 27 Marvel; 48 pages; 75c; What If Phoenix Had Lived?	10712
2	1	THE UNCANNY X-MEN No. 146 Marvel	10399
3	14*	SPIDER-WOMAN No. 38 Marvel; featuring the X-Men	6777
4	3	THE NEW TEEN TITANS No. 8 DC	6099
5	2	DAZZLER No. 4 Marvel	5561
6	4	TALES OF THE GREEN LANTERN CORPS No. 2 DC	4180
7	10	MICRONAUTS No. 30 Marvel-Mego	4145
8	7	MOON KNIGHT No. 8 Marvel	4089
9	8	THE AVENGERS No. 208 Marvel	4048
10	6	KA-ZAR THE SAVAGE No. 3 Marvel	4035
11	12*	KING CONAN No. 6 Marvel; 48 pages; 75c	3855
12	13	IRON MAN No. 147 Marvel	3796
13	11	FANTASTIC FOUR No. 231 Marvel	3730
14	12	THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 217 Marvel	3709
15	5	ROM No. 19 Marvel-Parker Bros.	3376
16	16	CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 123 Marvel	3341
17	14	STAR WARS No. 48 Marvel-Lucasfilms	3308
18	19	PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN No. 55 Marvel	3189
19	20	THOR No. 308 Marvel	3058
20	20*	MARVEL PREMIERE No. 60 Marvel; Doctor Who	3036
21	19*	DOCTOR STRANGE No. 47 Marvel	2929
22	15	MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE No. 76 Marvel; The Thing and Iceman	2815
23	24	MARVEL TEAM-UP No. 106 Marvel; Spider-Man and Captain America	2799
24	22	WARLORD No. 46 DC	2615
25	25	THE INCREDIBLE HULK No. 260 Marvel	2589
26	23	THE DEFENDERS No. 96 Marvel; Ghost Rider appears	2560
27	9	MASTER OF KUNG FU No. 101 Marvel	2476
28	27	THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK No. 17 Marvel	2470
29	26	POWER MAN AND IRON FIST No. 70 Marvel	2334
30	28	THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN No. 64 Marvel; black and white magazine; $1.25	2251
31	21	CAPTAIN AMERICA No. 258 Marvel	2155
32	32*	STAR TREK No. 14 Marvel-Paramount	2137
33	30	JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 191 DC	2106
34	31	THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES No. 276 DC	2012
35	29	DC COMICS PRESENTS No. 34 DC; Superman and the Marvel Family	1985
36	32	GHOST RIDER No. 57 Marvel	1916
37	34	BATMAN No. 336 DC	1842
38	33	ADVENTURE COMICS PRESENTS DIAL "H" FOR HERO No. 482 DC	1760
39	35	GREEN LANTERN No. 141 DC	1734
40	37	DETECTIVE COMICS No. 503 DC	1598
41	62	FLASH GORDON No. 33 Whitman; part three of movie adaptation	1533
42	38	THE FLASH No. 298 DC	1510
43	39	SUPERMAN No. 360 DC	1471
44	34	THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD No. 175 DC	1460
45	42	THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERBOY No. 18 DC	1399
46	40	ACTION COMICS No. 520 DC	1362
47	48*	WORLD'S FINEST COMICS No. 269 DC; 48 pages; $1.00	1104
48	43	WONDER WOMAN No. 280 DC	1061
49	--	CHARLTON BULLSEYE No. 1 Charlton; Blue Beetle and The Question	1054
50	49	DC SPECIAL BLUE-RIBBON DIGEST No. 10 DC; digest; 95c; Warlord	805

This mo.	Last mo.	Title, number Publisher, format, special features, price if not 50c	No. Sold
51	49*	THE SPIRIT No. 27 Kitchen; black and white magazine; $2.00	775
52	48	JONAH HEX No. 49 DC	773
53	46	HEAVY METAL No. 49 [VSF!] HM; color magazine, $2.00	747
54	50	MARVEL SUPER ACTION No. 32 Marvel; Avengers reprints	658
55	51	THE BEST OF DC No. 13 DC; digest; 95c; Superman team-ups	642
56	52	MARVEL TALES STARRING SPIDER-MAN No. 128 Marvel; reprints	641
57	57*	THE ROOK No. 8 Warren; black and white magazine, $2.00	603
58	58	UNKNOWN SOLDIER No. 252 DC	501
59	57	MARVEL SUPER-HEROES No. 98 Marvel; Hulk reprints	456
60	63	WEIRD WAR TALES No. 100 DC	454
61	59	SGT. ROCK No. 353 DC	398
62	60	EERIE No. 121 Warren; black and white magazine; $2.00	378
63	56	SUPER FRIENDS No. 45 DC	378
64	61	CREEPY No. 127 Warren; black and white magazine, $2.00	358
65	54	GHOSTS No. 101 DC	344
66	65	THE UNEXPECTED No. 211 DC	302
67	66	SECRETS OF HAUNTED HOUSE No. 37 DC	299
68	64	HOUSE OF MYSTERY No. 293 DC	287
69	67*	SGT. FURY No. 164 Marvel; reprints	267
70	68	G.I. COMBAT No. 230 DC; 48 pages; $1.00	262
71	73	CRAZY MAGAZINE No. 74 Marvel; black and white magazine; 75c	136
72	78*	RICHIE RICH RICHES No. 53 Harvey	118
73	78	RICHIE RICH No. 203 Harvey	116
74	77*	RICHIE RICH MONEY WORLD No. 52 Harvey	116
75	75*	RICHIE RICH BANK BOOKS No. 52 Harvey	106
76	85*	RICHIE RICH AND GLORIA No. 19 Harvey	105
77	84*	RICHIE RICH AND JACKIE JOKERS No. 43 Harvey	105
78	80*	RICHIE RICH JACKPOTS No. 51 Harvey	105
79	81*	RICHIE RICH MILLIONS No. 103 Harvey	105
80	73*	RICHIE RICH VAULTS OF MYSTERY No. 40 Harvey	105
81	83*	RICHIE RICH INVENTIONS No. 19 Harvey	103
82	90*	SAD SACK AND THE SARGE No. 149 Harvey	86
83	92*	DEVIL KIDS No. 105 Harvey	85
84	93*	THE FRIENDLY GHOST CASPER No. 216 Harvey	84
85	89*	LAUGH COMICS DIGEST MAGAZINE No. 34 Archie; digest; 95c	78
86	--	BETTY AND ME No. 120 Archie	74
87	85	ARCHIE No. 304 Archie	70
88	88*	JUGHEAD WITH ARCHIE DIGEST MAGAZINE No. 44 Archie; digest; 95c	68
89	97*	ARCHIE...ARCHIE ANDREWS WHERE ARE YOU DIGEST No.18 Archie; digest; 95c	68
90	84	LAUGH No. 382 Archie	68
91	91	JUGHEAD No. 312 Archie	62
92	100*	ARCHIE'S PALS 'N' GALS No. 149 Archie	61
93	97	ARCHIE'S GIRLS, BETTY AND VERONICA No. 305 Archie	51
94	96	LIFE WITH ARCHIE No. 223 Archie	50
95	--	ARCHIE'S JOKEBOOK No. 276 Archie	49
96	--	ARCHIE'S TV LAUGH-OUT No. 81 Archie	49
97	93	PEP No. 373 Archie	49
98	100	EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE No. 92 Archie	46
99	98	LITTLE ARCHIE No. 166 Archie	44
100	--	CHARLTON CLASSICS No. 8 Charlton; Hercules reprints	44

PARTICIPATING SHOPS: Aardvarks, Alsinos and Altens, Westport, NY; Comic Cantwell and Nostalgia Emporium, Indianapolis; Comics & Comix, Berkeley; Starship Enterprises, Hollywood, FL; Bookie Parlor, Dayton, OH; Comic Kingdom, Chicago; The Book Nook, Champaign, IL; The Turning Page, Milwaukee; Fantasy Enterprises, Albany; Fabulous Fiction Bookstore, Worcester, MA; Collector's Corner, Grand Rapids; The Comic Store, Lancaster, PA; Larry's Comic Shop, Chicago; Bonney's, Norman, OK; Bill & Bob's, Brooklyn; Curious Book Shop, East Lansing, MI; Paperback Emporium, Cincinnati; Superhero Universe Store #10, Cambridge, MA; Supersnipes, New York City; Elda's Comix SF Records, Pittsburgh; King's Komix, Kasthy, Boise; Golden Fleece Magazines, Cleveland; Fantastic Worlds, Fort Worth, TX; Bob's Comics, Lawndale, CA; Truckers Union, Eau Claire, WI; Adventure III, Phoenix; Oak Leaf Stamps & Comics, Mason City, IA; RTC Comics, Colorado Springs; B&D Buyer Service, Moneta, VA; The Comic Rack, Spokane.

FANDOM CONFIDENTIAL

with Jim Engel & Chuck Fiala

this month: THOSE OLD FAMILIAR FACES AND "ONE BUN'S OPINION"

AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT, BIG NAME FANS LIKE CHUCK & ME RECEIVE A HUGE VOLUME OF MAIL EACH MONTH PROVIDING US FOR THE REALLY FANTASTIC JOB WE DO HERE AT FANDOM CONFIDENTIAL. OCCASIONALLY, HOWEVER, THERE IS THE UN-HUNGED, MENTALLY DEFICIENT INDIVIDUAL WHO SENDS US A LETTER WHICH ACTUALLY (GET THIS) CRITICIZES US! ONE SUCH WORTHLESS LAMEO IS TUJAKATON DEL PLANKTON OF SAUSBURY STEAK, RHODE ISLAND, WHO WRITES

"DEAR SCUM, I HATE YOU BOTH, YOU FILTHY PIGS! MONTH AFTER MONTH I HAVE TO LOOK AT YOUR SAME STUPID FANS SITTING BEHIND THAT SAME STUPID TABLE WITH THE WEIRD KLED SHEET OVER IT! IT NEVER CHANGES! JUST THE SAME UGLY FACES REPEATED OVER AND OVER! WHO TAKES THE PICTURES, GARRY TRUDEAU? AND THEN TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, WHEN I SPEND "

"SEVERAL HUNDRED DOLLARS TO TRAVEL THOUSANDS OF MILES TO MEET YOU MAGGOTS IN PERSON AT A CONVENTION, YOU HAVE THE GALL TO SHOW UP WITH THOSE SAME HIDEOUS HEADS PERCHED ON TOP OF YOUR ROUNDED SHOULDERS! LAST TIME I SAW YOU SLEAZE-BALLS IN REAL LIFE, I THREW UP ON NEAL ADAMS' SKETCH-PAD, AND IT ENDED UP COSTING ME $1,500! "

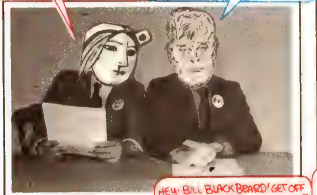
"IF YOU TWO PILES OF SEWAGE DON'T DO SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE VILE MUGS OF YOURS IN A HURRY, I SWEAR I'LL COME TO THE NEXT CHICAGOCON AND PUT MY LAR SHOES OVER YOUR FAT GREASY HEADS AND SET THEM ON FIRE! OR SLICE YOUR GUTS OUT LIKE MY FAVORITE HERO WOLVERINE WOULD DO (ONE ALWAYS, TUJAKATON. "

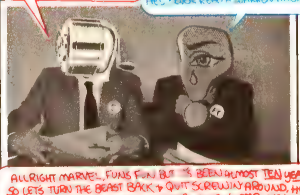
WELL TUJAKATON, WE OF COURSE ALWAYS PUT THE WISHES OF OUR READERS AHEAD OF OUR OWN DESIRE TO BORE AND ANNOY. SO AT GREAT PERSONAL EXPENSE WE ARE UNDERGOING PAINFUL COSMETIC SURGERY FOR PANELS 2, 3 AND 4 OF THIS MONTH'S F.C.

LIKE SHAKESPEARE WHERE THIS WILL MAKE F.C. JUST A LITTLE MORE ENJOYABLE FOR YOU AS WELL AS ANY OTHER READERS WHO HATE OUR FACES. NOW, LETS GET ON TO OTHER MATTERS. THIS IS INDEED A SPECIAL MONTH FOR JIM AND ME (AS IN THE SPIRIT OF "NEW FACES,...

WE ARE PROUD TO INTRODUCE "ONE BUN'S OPINION", OUR NEW SEMI-REGULAR SPOT WHICH FEATURES THE GUEST COMMENTARY OF THE VERY LATEST MEMBER OF THE FAN DOM CONFIDENTIAL TEAM, SID THE RABBIT!

SID HAS BEEN WITH US FOR ALMOST TEN YEARS NOW, AND HAS MADE NUMEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLD OF COMICS. HE SERVED AS TECHNICAL CONSULTANT ON HARVEY'S "BUNNY" SERIES, SPENT TWO YEARS BURNING BARRY SMITH COMICS AS C.C. BECK'S ASSISTANT, WORKED AS STAN LEE'S DUDE FROM 1966-72, AND THE ACHIEVEMENT HE'S PERHAPS MOST PROUD OF HES, EVER BEEN A WARREN MAGAZINE!





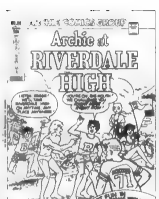
IT GIVES US GREAT PLEASURE TO PRESENT... SID THE RABBIT...

"...WITH "ONE BUN'S OPINION?

HEY! BILL BLACKBEARD! GET OFF BUD SAGENDORF'S BACK! WHAT IS IT WITH YOU - A PERSONAL VENDETTA OR SOMETHING? IF ANYTHING EVER HAPPENS TO HIM, THE COPS'LL KNOW WHO TO LOOK FOR!

ALL RIGHT, MARVEL FANS FUN BUT IT'S BEEN ALMOST TEN YEARS! SO LETS TURN THE BEAST BACK & QUIT SCREWIN' AROUND, HUH? I'VE GOT THE SOLUTION FOR WONDER WOMAN'S EMBLEM! JUST WRITE "WONDER WOMAN" ACROSS HER CHEST! IT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ELASTIC LAD! THERES CERTAINLY PLENTY OF ROOM! WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO REAL SUPERHERO NAMES? SPRITE! WHAT'S NEXT? TAB? FRESCA? SUGAR-FREE DR PEPPER? WHEN BOB KANE DIES, WILL DC HIRE A GHOST FOR HIM? HOWIE CHAYKIN! PUSH THAT SHIRT! YA WANNA GET SICK? I'M SID THE RABBIT! TURN THE PAGE!

PIX BY RUSS VAN DYKE



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Archie Comics

ARCHIE GIANT SERIES MAGAZINE No. 511, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover to this issue which features THE WORLD OF JUGHEAD. [7/28]

ARCHIE'S GIRLS, BETTY AND VERONICA No. 310, October. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [7/28]

ARCHIE'S JOKEBOOK No. 281, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [7/28]

ARCHIE'S PALS 'N' GALS No. 154, October. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [7/28]

JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS No. 104, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [7/28]

JUGHEAD JONES COMICS MAGAZINE DIGEST No. 18, October. [7/28]

ARCHIE No. 309, October. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [8/4]

JUGHEAD No. 317, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/4]

LAUGH No. 367, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/4]

LIFE WITH ARCHIE No. 227, November. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/4]

LITTLE ARCHIE No. 171, October. Dexter Taylor did the cover. [8/4]

LITTLE ARCHIE COMICS DIGEST MAGAZINE No. 9, October. [8/4]

ARCHIE AT RIVERDALE HIGH No. 82, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/11]

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BETTY AND ME No. 124, October. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [8/11]

EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE No. 97, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/11]

JOKEBOOK COMICS DIGEST ANNUAL MAGAZINE No. 9, October. [8/11]

THAT WILKIN BOY No. 50, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/11]

ARCHIE AND ME No. 130, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/18]

ARCHIE COMIC DIGEST MAGAZINE No. 50, October. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [8/18]

MAD HOUSE COMICS No. 126, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/18]

SABRINA THE TEEN-AGE WITCH No. 70, October. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [8/18]

Pacific Comics

Pacific Comics' second entry into the shop-only direct sales market is Mike Grell's STARSLAYER: THE LOG OF THE JOLLY ROGER. Starslayer (an unexplained title) begins his career as Torin MacQuillan, a warrior in

ancient Britain. Upon his death, he is transported into the distant, non-determined future time in which the solar system is freezing, save Earth (whose atmospheric pollutants cause a greenhouse effect which actually keeps Earth the only relatively warm place -- and thus the target of invasion by inhabitants of the other humanoids of the solar system). He is armed with a sword with unstable atoms, a multi-function raygun, a head-band which gives him infra-red and binocular vision despite having lost an eye in his earlier days, and an android monkey (SAM: Symbiotic Android Mindlink) which is Torin's teaching machine which allows him to function in the futuristic, mechanical time period. Unfortunately, the monkey was programmed to learn about Torin's past by watching old Humphrey Bogart movies (quite a film preservation society they must have!), so the monkey's dialogue will be straight from Bogie's mouth. The person who sent Torin to this time, Tamara, a beautiful scientist/warrior, gives him his Earth-saving mission: to retrieve the pieces of a medallion from the leaders of the Earth colonies on the other planets, which will reveal a power source known to "the ancients" which can save Earth from the invaders. But to get them, he must battle those who will gain most by him not succeeding. So, Torin, Tamara and SAM set sail in an old pirate ship (considerably converted) which sails on the "solar wind," called The Jolly Roger.

Coming Comics

STARSLAYER: THE LOG OF THE JOLLY ROGER No. 1, November. "Starslayer" is by Mike Grell. An English warrior from the distant past is sent into the future by a sorceress to help protect Earth from invasion from Earth colonies of the solar system. Grell did the cover. [August]

Marvel Coming Comics

DAREDEVIL No. 176, November. "Hunters" is by Frank Miller and Klaus Janson. Deprived of his radar sense, Daredevil must seek out a person from his past to help him learn how to survive. Elektra also appears. Miller did the cover. [7/28]

DAZZLER No. 9, November. "The Sound and the Fury" is by Danny Fingeroth, Frank Springer and Vince Colletta. While Project Pegasus is going crazy, Dazzler does battle with Klaw, Master of Sound. Plus: the little guy who's been following Alison around. Bill Sienkiewicz and John Romita did the cover. [7/28]

DENNIS THE MENACE No. 1, November. Marvel re-enters the field of comics for children by taking over the long-running mischievous kid prototype in stories written by Fred Toole and drawn by the Hank Ketcham studio. [7/28]

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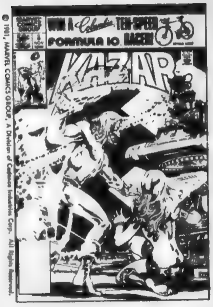


KA-ZAR THE SAVAGE No. 8, November. "In The Beginning" is by Bruce Jones, Brent Anderson and Carlos Garzon. The origins of Atlantis and Pangea are revealed to Ka-Zar, while Dirk makes his return. Anderson did the cover. [7/28]

MARVEL SUPER-HEROES No. 103, November. From INCREDIBLE HULK #155 comes "Destination Nightmare" by Archie Goodwin, Herb Trimpe and John Severin. Trimpe did the cover. [7/28]

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE No. 81, November. "No Home For Heroes" is by Tom DeFalco, Ron Wilson and Chic Stone. The Sub-Mariner goes back to where he was discovered by the Human Torch so long ago and runs into the Thing in dutch with A.I.M. and Modok. Wilson and Stone did the cover. [7/28]

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL No. 3, November. "Dark Side of the Moon" is by David Kraft, Jim Sherman, Alan Weiss

and Jim Mooney. The unfortunate Man-Wolf's career comes to a close, as J. Jonah Jameson's tender side is finally shown. Other features include a diagram of Peter Parker's rooms (revised), Aunt May's photo album, and other pin-up pages. Weiss and Joe Rubinstein did the cover. [7/28]

SPIDEY SUPER STORIES No. 55, November. [7/28]

STARBURST No. 36, October. An interview with THE HOWLING's director Joe Dante, plus features on THEM, the STAR WARS radio show, THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW, ESCAPE FROM NEW YORK and an interview with Buster Crabbe comprise the issue's main contents. [7/28]

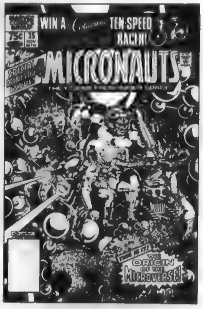
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 222, November. "Father Than The Eye" is by Bill Mantlo, John Romita Jr. and Jim Mooney. Spidey races a death-match with the evil speed demon Speed Demon, formerly known as The Whizzer. Walt Simonson did the cover. [8/4]

CAPTAIN AMERICA No. 263, November. "The Last Movie" is by J.M. DeMatteis, Mike Zeck and Gene Day. All the old hanging plot threads are rewoven into the story, as Nomad, the Ameridroid and the Captain America serial figure in Cap's "final" battle with the Red Skull. Zeck and John Beatty did the cover. [8/4]

CRAZY No. 79, October. The parody strips feature 9 TO 5 and MAGNUM, P.I., while other features include LOONEY LABELS by Gary Hallgren, Steve Skeates' "How to Profit From The Coming Nuclear Holocaust", Obnozio by Virgil Diamond and Alan Kupperberg, Teen Hulk by Jim Owsley and Marie Severin, and a Hallgren cover. [8/4]

GHOST RIDER No. 62, November. "Menace of the Oil Jinns" by Michael Fleisher, Jack Sparling and Mike Esposito. On the trail of the Water Wizard, GR crosses paths with the Saudi Arabian hero The Arabian Knight. Herb Trimpe and Klaus Janson did the cover. [8/4]

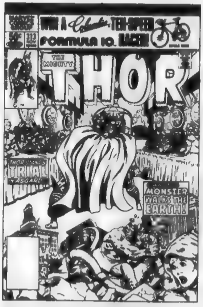
MICRONAUTS No. 35, November. "Origin of the Microverse" is by Bill Mantlo, Val Mayerik and Danny Bulanadi. This is the double-sized issue, and Dr. Strange guest-stars as the confrontation between the Micronauts and the Force Commander's Death Squad finally culminates. Bob Layton did the cover. [8/4]



MOON KNIGHT No. 13, November. "Cream of the Jest" is by Doug Moench, Bill Sienkiewicz and Klaus Janson. MK teams up with Daredevil. Ron Wilson and Dave Simons did the cover. [8/4]

THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK No. 22, November. "Bad Vibes" is by David Kraft, Mike Vosburg and Frank Springer. She-Hulk has her hands full with another super-character who can vibrate people into nothingness. (I'll bet that breaks the ice at parties.) Vosburg and Al Milgrom did the cover. [8/4]

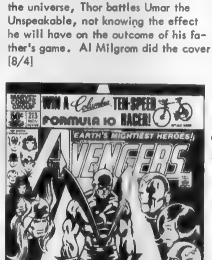
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN No. 69, October. "The Eye of the Sorcerer" is by Roy Thomas, Ernie Chan and Alfredo Alcala. Conan accompanies a father and son on a journey to gain a surprise for a sorcerer. Plus, part two of the LOST RACE adaptation by Thomas, Gene Day and Danny Bulanadi, and the latest on the making of the CONAN movie. Joe Jusko did the cover. [8/4]



THOR No. 313, November. "The Judgement of Tyr" is by Doug Moench, Keith Pollard and Gene Day. Thor stands trial before Odin. Also, another in the Tales of Asgard series by Ralph Macchio, Mark Gruenwald, Pollard and Day. Pollard did the cover. [8/4]

THOR ANNUAL No. 9, November. "The Great Game" is by Chris Clare-

mont, Luke McDonnell and Vince Colletta. While Odin and the dread Dormammu play a game of chess with the universe, Thor battles Umar the Unspeakable, not knowing the effect he will have on the outcome of his father's game. Al Milgrom did the cover. [8/4]

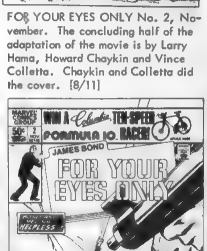


THE AVENGERS No. 213, November. "Courtmartial" is by Jim Shooter, Bob Hall and Dan Green. Yellowjacket is taken to task for his misdeeds and drummed out of the Avengers. Hall and Green did the cover. [8/11]

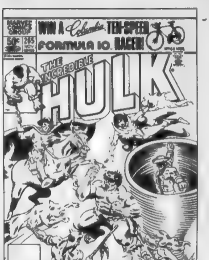
EPIC ILLUSTRATED No. 8, October. This issue's features include: "Punk Zone" by Denny Daley and Mike Saenz; "Ankhesenamun" by Trina Robbins; "A Little Love, A Little Hate" by Arthur Suydam; "Contact" by Tim Conrad; "Children of the Stars" by Charles Vess (an expanded version of a story which has appeared in a fanzine); and chapter twelve of "Metamorphosis Odyssey" by Jim Starlin. Howard Chaykin did the cover. [8/11]

CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 128, November. "And Life Sprang Forth From These" is by J.M. DeMatteis, and Gil Kane. Conan is blackmailed into going on a quest for the wizard Pau-Styss, little knowing that he is aiding him in taking over the world. Kane did the cover. [8/11]

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY No. 2, November. The concluding half of the adaptation of the movie is by Larry Hama, Howard Chaykin and Vince Colletta. Chaykin and Colletta did the cover. [8/11]



THE INCREDIBLE HULK No. 265, November. "You Can't Always Get What You Want But If You Try Sometimes You Just Might Find You Get What You Need" is by Bill Mantlo and Sal Buscema (though Jagger and Richards thought of it first). Thanks to the Corruptor, Hulk must face Red Wolf, Night Rider, Lobo, the Texas Twister, Shooting Star and Firebird in order to save Betty Ross, Rick Jones and the entire world. Al Milgrom did the cover. [8/11]



MARVEL TALES STARRING SPIDER-MAN No. 133, November. Represented from AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #156 is "On A Clear Day You Can See... The Mirage" by Len Wein, Ross Andru and Mike Esposito. Plus the conclusion of the first CAPTAIN BRITAIN story, by Chris Claremont, Herb Trimpe and Fred Kida. John Romita did the cover. [8/11]

POWER MAN AND IRON FIST No. 75, November. "This Insubstantial Pageant Faded" is by Mary Jo Duffy, Kerry Gammill and Ricardo Villamonte. This double-length issue features the return of K'un Lun, the secret of Master Khan, the menace of the plant people, the showdown with the Blue Ninja, and the fate of the long-lost sister of Iron Fist. Bob Larkin did the painted cover. [8/11]

ROM No. 24, November. "No Place Like Home" is by Bill Mantlo, Sal Buscema and Joe Sinnott. Nova and the New Champions (Comet, Crimebuster and Powerhouse, to refresh your memory)

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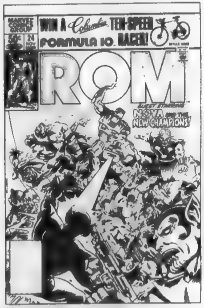
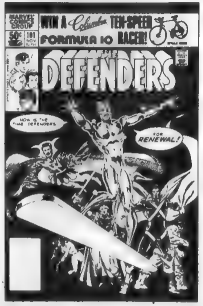
guest star as Ron heads home and finds himself in the middle of a war between the Kree and Xandar. Al Milgrom did the cover. [8/11]

THE UNCANNY X-MEN No. 151, November. "The X-Men Minus One" is by Chris Claremont, Jim Sherman, Bob McLeod and Joe Rubinstein. The White Queen swaps minds with Aurora and Kitty's parents remove her from the Xavier school and put her in the White Queen's. Also: The Hellfire Club and The Sentinels. Dave Cockrum and Rubinstein did the cover. [8/11]



THE DEFENDERS No. 101, November. "Renewal" is by J.M. DeMatteis, Don Perlin and Joe Sinnott. The recovery issue; after defeating the Six-Fingered Hand, the Defenders try to sort things out. Al Milgrom did the cover. [8/18]

DRAGONSLAYER No. 2, November. The second half of the movie adaptation is reprinted and is by Denny O'Neil, Marie Severin and John Tartaglione. Severin did the cover. [8/18]



FANTASTIC FOUR No. 236, November. "Terror In a Tiny Town" is by John Byrne. This is a $1.00, 64 pager which celebrates the 20th anniversary of the FF (and the Marvel Age of Comics), and it features an anniversary battle with Doctor Doom and the Puppet Master. Also included: a Lee/Kirby FF reunion! Byrne and Terry Austin did the cover. [8/18]

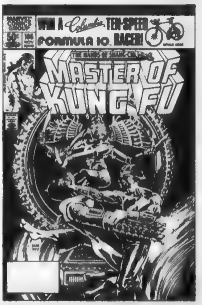
IRON MAN No. 152, November. "Escape From Heaven's Hand" is by David Michelinie, John Romita Jr. and Bob Layton. East Germans have Bethany Cabe prisoner and Iron Man uses the new Stealth Armor to free her. Bob Layton did the cover, which features a background photograph. [8/18]

MARVEL SUPER ACTION No. 37, November. "The Blaze of Battle, The Flames of Love" is by Roy Thomas, John Buscema and Tom Palmer and appeared originally in AVENGERS #76. Buscema and Palmer did the cover. [8/18]

MARVEL TEAM-UP No. 111, November. "Of Spiders and Serpents" is by J.M. DeMatteis, Herb Trimpe and Mike Esposito. The Hulk, Sub-Mariner and the Defenders are captives of the Serpent Men and Spider-Man and Devil-Slayer try to rescue them. Trimpe and Frank Giacoia did the cover. [8/18]

MASTER OF KUNG FU No. 106, November. "The Master Assassin" is by Doug Moench, Gene Day and Armando Gil. Shang-Chi battles Razor Fist, a mystery bad-guy and a host of assassins. Day did the cover. [8/18]

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN No. 60, November. "Beetlemania" is by Roger Stern, Ed Hannigan and Jim Mooney. Spider-Man battles the Beetle for the life of The Gibbon.. Plus, "Birth of a Legend" by Stern and Greg LaRocque. Spider-Man's origin gets retold with some new facts revealed for the first time here. This is a double-sized 75¢ issue to make up for the fact that #50 was only normal-sized. Frank Miller did the cover. [8/18]



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RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK No. 3, November. "The Secret Revealed" is by Walt Simonson, John Buscema and Klaus Janson. The final chapter of the adaptation to this rip-snorting, action-packed picture. (Will we see Indiana Jones again in comic form?) Simonson did the cover. [8/18]

STAR WARS No. 53, November. "Last Gift From Alderaan" is by Chris Claremont, Carmine Infantino, Tom Palmer and Alan Kupperberg. Princess Leia crash-lands on an Empire-dominated planet in this revised reprint from the British weekly. Walt Simonson did the cover. [8/18]

ARAK/SON OF THUNDER No. 3, November. "Sword of the Iron Maiden, Part I" is by Roy Thomas, Ernie Colon and Tony DeZuniga. Arak meets a warrior woman and the pair take on a wizard.

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Colon did the cover. [8/6]

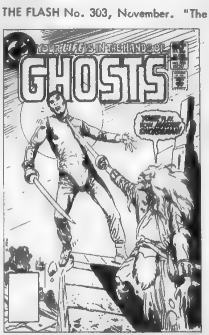
BATMAN No. 341, November. "The Ghost of Wayne Manor" is by Gerry Conway, Irv Novick and Frank McLaughlin. Wayne Manor's been deserted so long that it's now inhabited by ghosts. Also, Robin stars in "Night of the Coven" by Conway, Novick and Mike DeCarlo. Jim Aparo did the cover. [8/6]

THE BEST OF DC No. 18, November. The NEW TEEN TITANS are spotlighted with a brand new story, "Reunion!" by Marv Wolfman, Carmine Infantino and Romeo Tanghal, which brings back Speedy and Aqualad. The reprints are "Titans Fit the Battle of Jericho" (TEEN TITANS #20) by Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Neal Adams and Nick Cardy; "Citadel of Fear" (TT #21) by the same team; "Halfway to Holocaust" (TT #22) by the same team; and "Skis of Death" (TT #24) by Bob Haney, Gil Kane and Cardy. George Perez did the cover. [8/6]

DC COMICS PRESENTS No. 39, November. "The Thing That Goes 'Woof' In The Night" is by Martin Pasko, Joe Staton and Bob Smith. Superman and Plastic Man battle The Toyman. Then we discover "Whatever Happened To Richard Dragon, Kung-Fu Fighter?" in a story by Mike Barr, Alex Saviuk and Vince Colletta. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/6]

DC SPECIAL BLUE-RIBBON DIGEST No. 15, November. The theme of the issue is Secret Origins of Super-Villains, and the stories are: "The Case of the 'Real-Gone' Flash" (from THE FLASH #128) by John Broome, Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella; "The Amazing Bizarro" (SUPERBOY #68) by George Papp; "The Day 100,000 People Vanished" (GREEN LANTERN #7) by John Broome, Gil Kane and Joe Giella; "The Mad Hatter of Gotham City" (DETECTIVE #230) by Bob Kane/Sheldon Moldoff and Charles Paris; "The Slave Ship of Space" (JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #3) by Gardner Fox, Mike Sekowsky and Bernard Sachs. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/6]

THE FLASH No. 303, November. "The



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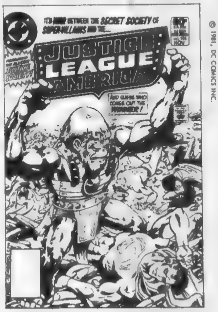
Top Is Alive and Well In Henry Allen" is by Cary Bates, Carmine Infantino and Bob Smith. The Top, presumed dead by those who attended his funeral, isn't. Also, Firestorm stars in "The Hyena Syndrome" by Gerry Conway, Pat Broderick and Brett Breeding. Infantino and Smith did the cover. [8/6]

GHOSTS No. 106, November. Stories in this issue are "Waterfront Saint" by John Ellis Sech and Adrian Gonzales; "To Kill a Ghost" by Robert Kanigher and Keith Giffen; "Sorcerer's Sword" by Bill Kelley and Fred Carrillo; "Remember's Big" by Robin Snyder and Sonny Trinidad. Joe Kubert did the cover. [8/6]

G.I. COMBAT No. 235, November. The Haunted Tank stars in two stories, "World Wars Never End" and "Battlefield Speed Demon," both by Robert Kanigher, Sam Glanzman and Dick Ayers. The O.S.S. story is "Fury At Stavanger Fjord" by Kanigher and E. R. Cruz; other tales are "Return to Hell" by Kanigher and Joe Matucenio"; "Nest of Enemies" by George Kashdan and Vic Catan; "Dead Man's Deed" by Kashdan and Ayers; and "Target Switch" by Kashdan and Ayers. Joe Kubert did the cover. [8/6]

JONAH HEX No. 54, November. "Trapped In The Parrot's Lair" is by Michael Fleisher and Tony DeZuniga. El Papagayo returns to make things miserable for jolly Jonah. Also, the Tejano Ranger rides again in "Commanche Vengeance, Part II" by Dan Mishkin, Gary Cohn and Tom Yeates. DeZuniga did the cover. [8/6]



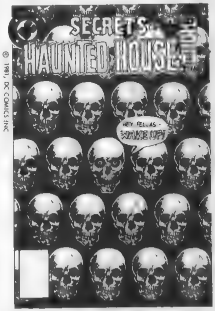
JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 196, November. "Countdown to Crisis" is by Gerry Conway, George Perez and Romeo Tanghal. The JLA and JSA are seemingly defeated by the Secret Society of Super-Villains in part II of the annual team-up tale. Perez and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/6]

KRYPTON CHRONICLES No. 3, November. "Race to Overtake the Past" is by E. Nelson Bridwell, Curt Swan and Frank Chiaramonte. The mini-series draws to a close as Superman and Supergirl witness the actions of their ancestors. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/6]

THE NEW TEEN TITANS No. 13, November. "Friends and Foes Alike" is by Marv Wolfman, George Perez and Romeo Tanghal. The hunt for the murderers of the Doom Patrol (who'll be, if you recall, the Brotherhood of Evil), begins. Perez and Tanghal did the cover. [8/6]

SECRETS OF HAUNTED HOUSE No. 42, November. Work in this issue includes "Arrghh!" by Robin Snyder, Howard Bender and Adrian Gonzales; "I Love You, Harry" by Gonzales; "Date With the Devil" by Tom Sciacca, Bender and Andy Mushinsky; "Destination Limbo" by George Kashdan, Bender and Gonzales; "Mystic Murder" by Steve Skeates and Paris Cullins; "Get Ahead" by Carl Wessler, Dick Ayers and Rodin Rodriguez; "Trade Alliance" by Dan Mishkin, Gary Cohn and Mushinsky. Joe Kubert did the cover. [8/6]

SUPERMAN No. 365, November. "When Kryptonians Clash" is by Cary Bates, Curt Swan and Frank Chiaramonte. Supergirl goes power mad and tries to shrink Superman down to nothing. Plus, The In-Between Years are spotlighted in "Where Oh Where Has Superboy Gone?" by Bob Rozakis, Kurt Schaffenberger and Frank Chiaramonte. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/6]



WEIRD WAR TALES No. 105, November. The Creature Commandos are cover-featured in "The Creature Commandos Fight the War at Home" by J. Marc DeMatteis and Fred Carrillo. The remaining stories are "Death's Second Face" by Robert Kanigher and Steve Ditko; and "The Last War Game" by

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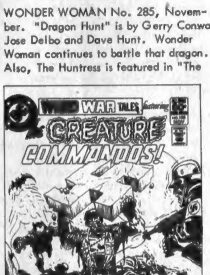
George Kashdan and Ric Estrada. Jim Aparo did the cover. [8/6]

WONDER WOMAN No. 285, November. "Dragon Hunt" is by Gerry Conway, Jose Delbo and Dave Hunt. Wonder Woman continues to battle that dragon. Also, The Huntress is featured in "The



Man In The Murder Ward" by Paul Levitz, Joe Staton and Bob Smith. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/6]

ACTION COMICS No. 525, November. "Neutron Nightmare" is by Marv Wolfman, Joe Staton and Frank McLaughlin. Superman is the target of revenge by Neutron, the Living Bomb. Then, Air Wave solos in "Air Wave Goes Blank" by Bob Rozakis, Alex Saviuk and Frank Chiaramonte. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/20]

ADVENTURE COMICS PRESENTS DIAL "H" FOR HERO No. 487, November. Chris and Vicki star in two stories this month: "To Charm The Serpent" by George Kashdan and Don Heck, and "To Die Twice In Fire and Ice" by Marv Wolfman, Carmine Infantino and Dennis Jensen. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/20]

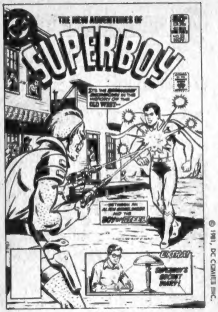
ALL-STAR SQUADRON No. 3, November. "The Dooms of Dark December is by Roy Thomas, Rich Buckler and Jerry Ordway. The Squadron tackles Solomon Grundy and Per Degaton both at the same time. Buckler and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/20]

THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD No. 180, November. "The Scepter of the Dragon-God" is by Michael Fleisher and Jim Aparo. Batman is reunited with The Spectre -- and the Spectre's old ADVENTURE COMICS creative team. Also, Nemesis stars in "Be Still, My Trembling Heart" by Cary Burkett and Dan Spiegle. Aparo did the cover. [8/20]

DETECTIVE COMICS No. 508, November. "Secret of the Sphinx Sinister" is by Gerry Conway, Don Newton and Dan Adkins. Batman investigates secrets of the East. And Batgirl takes on arson in "Fires of Destruction" by Cary Burkett, Jose Delbo and Joe Giella. Jim Aparo did the cover. [8/20]

GREEN LANTERN No. 146, November. "Prisons And Other Cages" is by Marv Wolfman and Joe Staton. The gold steal continues. And the final Adam Strange chapter rounds out the issue. "The Shadow Children" is by Laurie Sutton, Carmine Infantino and Dennis Jensen. Staton did the cover. [8/20]

HOUSE OF MYSTERY No. 298, November. In this issue: "Stalker On a Starless Night" by Jack Harris and Tom Sutton; "Even Dead Men Sing The Blues" by J.M. DeMatteis and Adrian Gonzales; "Pipeline To Hell" by Dan Mishkin, Gary Cohn and Ruben Yandoc; and "Killer Turf" by Bill Kelley and Gerry Talaoc. Joe Kubert did the

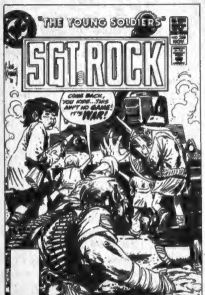


cover. [8/20]

THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES No. 291, November. "Madness Is The Molecule Master" by Roy Thomas, Paul Levitz, Steve Ditko and Bruce Patterson. Trapped in the 20th Century, the Legion must convince Superboy that he is Superboy. George Perez and Bruce Patterson did the cover. [8/20]

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERBOY No. 23, November. "The Superboy Who Never Was" is by Cary Bates, Kurt Schaffenberger and Dave Hunt. Superboy finds himself in a gunfight in the old west -- with an alien. Also, "The Day of the Secret Signal" is by E. Nelson Bridwell, John Calnan and Joe Giella. Schaffenberger and Hunt did the cover. [8/20]

SGT. ROCK No. 358, November. "The Young Warriors" is by Robert Kanigher and Frank Redondo and stars Rock. The Men of Easy appear in "Surprise Punch" by Kanigher and the Kubert students; the Kubert school also handles



"King's Blood," "Deep Prey" and "Bomb Disposal," the last of which was written by Bill Kelley. Joe Kubert did the cover. [8/20]

THE SUPERMAN FAMILY No. 212, November. Supergirl takes on Blackrock in "Payment on Demand" by Martin Pasko, Winslow Mortimer and Vince Colletta; Mr. and Mrs. Superman star in "The Great Superman Hoax," by E. Nelson Bridwell, Kurt Schaffenberger and Jim Janes; Clark Kent is spotlighted in "The Newsboy Who Saw Too Much" by Bob Rozakis, John Calnan and Joe Giella; Lois Lane stars in "A Deadly Day In the Life" by Paul Levitz, Bob Oksner and Colletta; and Jimmy Olsen is featured in "The Last Dangerous Days and Sleepless Nights of Jimmy Olsen" by Pasko, Jose Delbo and Frank McLaughlin. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/20]

THE UNEXPECTED No. 216, November. This issue features: "Dog Days" by Robin Snyder, Howard Bender and Adrian Gonzales; "Tall, Dark and Deadly" by Snyder, Dick Ayers and Bruce Patterson; "Samurai Nightmare" by Dan Mishkin, Gary Cohn, Gonzales and Tex Blaisdell; "We Are the Masters" by Paul S. Newman, Ken Landgraf and Vic Catan; and "Face Your Fears" by Jack Harris and Noly Penaligan. Joe Kubert did the cover. [8/20]

UNKNOWN SOLDIER No. 257, November. "Till Armagedon Do Us Part" is by Bob Haney, Dick Ayers and Gerry Talaoc, as Unk tries to prevent the Nazis from getting a missile. Captain Storm is featured in "You Can't Bury The Dead" by Robert Kanigher, Adrian Gonzales and Sam Grainger; and a Gallery of War story rounds out the issue: "Blood Brothers" by Kanigher and Jack Sparling. Joe Kubert did

the cover. [8/20]

WARLORD No. 51, November. Reprinted from the very first issue of WARLORD is "This Savage World" by Mike Grell. There's a new chapter of Dragonsword, the new back-up strip, in the issue by Paul Levitz and Tom Yeates. Grell did the cover. [8/20]

WORLD'S FINEST COMICS No. 273, November. Superman and Batman star in "In The Citadel of the Weapon-Master" by Cary Burkett, Adrian Gonzales and Frank McLaughlin. Also featured: Shazam in "Sivana's Nobel Prize" by Nelson Bridwell, Don Newton and Dan Adkins; Plastic Man (joining the roster) in "Design For Dying" by Martin Pasko, Joe Staton and Bob Smith; Hawkman in "Victory?" by Bob Rozakis, Alex Saviuk and Rodin Rodriguez; and Green Arrow in "Assault on Castle Vertigo" by Bob Haney, Trevor Von Eeden and Larry Mahlstedt. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [8/20]

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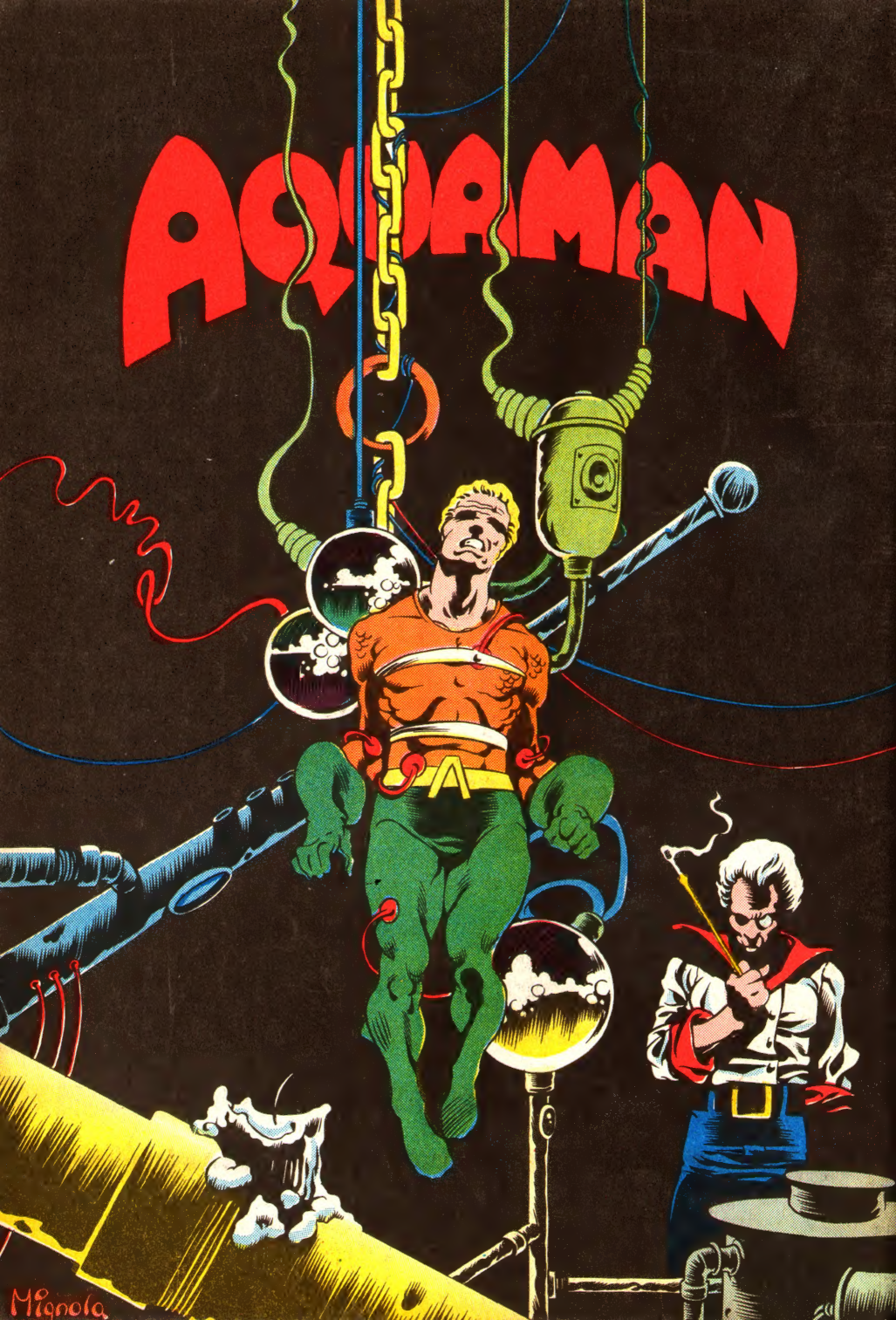
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